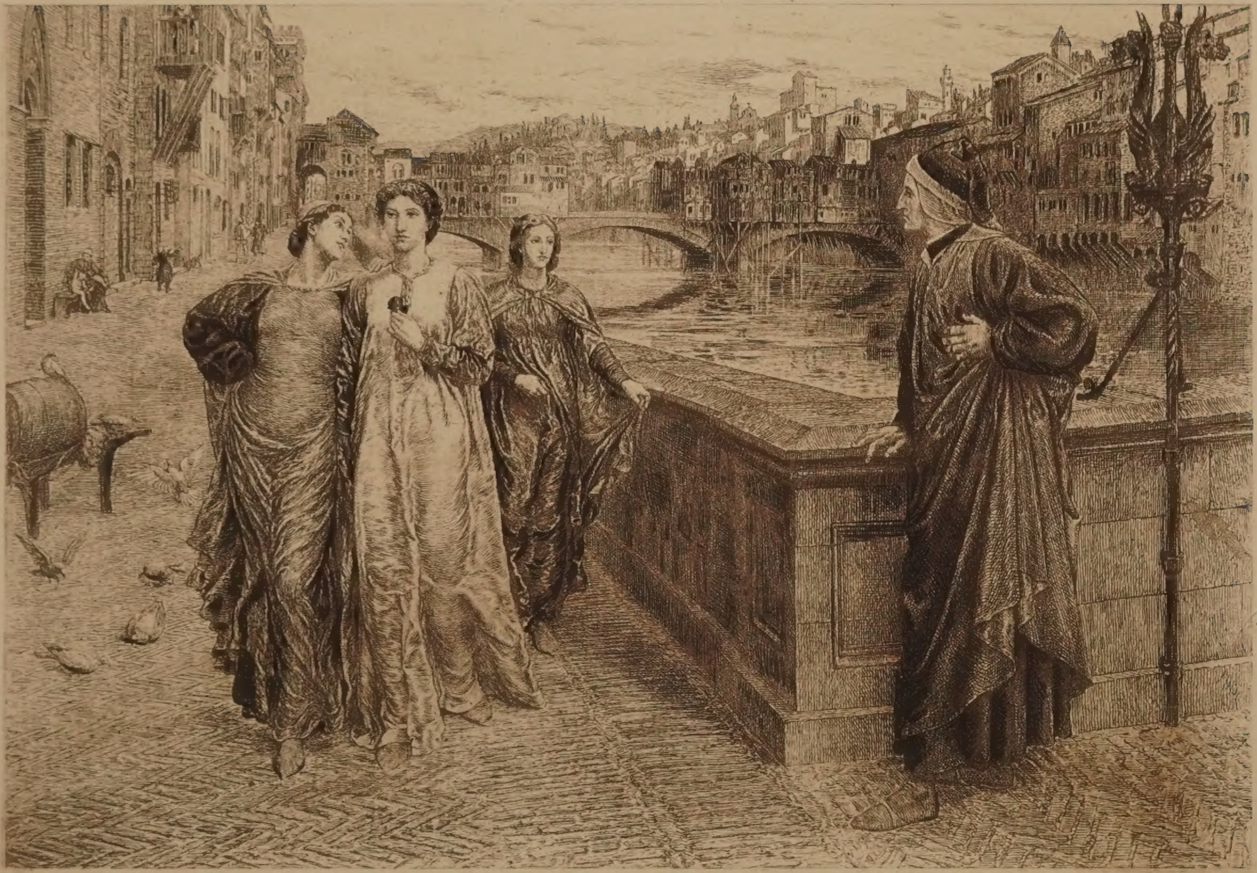
GREAT MEN
AND
FAMOUS WOMEN

#14.50

HENRY HOLIDAY.



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GREAT MEN AND FAMOUS WOMEN

A Series
of
Pen and Pencil Sketches
of
THE LIVES OF MORE THAN 200
OF THE MOST PROMINENT PERSONAGES IN HISTORY

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CONTENTS OF VOLUME VII.

SUBJECT	AUTHOR	PAGE
ROBERT BROWNING,		191
WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT,	*Richard Henry Stoddard,*	148
JOHN BUNYAN,	*John Greenleaf Whittier,*	66
ROBERT BURNS,	*Will Carleton,*	112
THOMAS CARLYLE,	*W. Wallace,*	154
Letter from Carlyle on the "Choice of a Profession,"		161
CERVANTES,	*Joseph Forster,*	39
THOMAS CHATTERTON,	*Colonel Richard Malcolm Johnston,*	107
GEOFFREY CHAUCER,	*Alice King,*	29
JAMES FENIMORE COOPER,	*President Charles F. Thwing,*	144
DANTE,	*Archdeacon Farrar, D.D., F.R.S.,*	19
DANIEL DE FOE,	*Clark Russell,*	72
CHARLES DICKENS,	*Walter Besant,*	186
RALPH WALDO EMERSON,	*Moncure D. Conway,*	166
Letter from Emerson to his child on the subject of "Health,"		173
GOETHE,	*Rev. Edward Everett Hale,*	122
OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES,	*Francis H. Underwood,*	196
HOMER,	*William Ewart Gladstone,*	1
HORACE,	*J. W. Mackail,*	16
VICTOR HUGO,	*Margaret O. W. Oliphant,*	161
WASHINGTON IRVING,		140
SAMUEL JOHNSON,	*Lord Macaulay,*	99
HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW,	*Hezekiah Butterworth,*	174
JOHN MILTON,		60
MOLIÈRE,	*Sir Walter Scott,*	50
PETRARCH,	*Alice King,*	25
PLATO,	*George Grote, F.R.S.,*	7
ALEXANDER POPE,	*Austin Dobson,*	82
SCHILLER,	*B. L. Farjeon,*	116
SIR WALTER SCOTT,	*W. C. Taylor, LL.D.,*	130
Letter of advice from Scott to his son,		135
WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE,	*Senator John J. Ingalls,*	44
DEAN SWIFT,	*Samuel Archer,*	77
TORQUATO TASSO,		34
ALFRED TENNYSON,	*Clarence Cook,*	182
VIRGIL,		12
VOLTAIRE,	*M. C. Lockwood, D.D.,*	92
WILLIAM WORDSWORTH,		136

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

VOLUME VII.

PHOTOGRAVURES

ILLUSTRATION	ARTIST	TO FACE PAGE
THE FIRST MEETING OF DANTE AND BEATRICE, . . .	*Henry Holiday*	*Frontispiece*
PETRARCH AND LAURA INTRODUCED TO THE EMPEROR AT AVIGNON, ...	*Vacslav Brozik*	28
A DINNER AT THE HOUSE OF MOLIÈRE AT AUTEUIL, .	*Georges-Gaston Mélingue*	58
THE ARREST OF VOLTAIRE AND HIS NIECE BY FREDERICK'S ORDER, ...	*Jules Girardet*	96
VICTOR HUGO, ...	*From life*	162
LONGFELLOW'S STUDY, ...	*From photograph*	178

WOOD-ENGRAVINGS AND TYPOGRAVURES

ILLUSTRATION	ARTIST	TO FACE PAGE
HOMER RECITING THE ILIAD, ...	*J. Coomans*	6
THE SCHOOL OF ATHENS, ...	*Raphael*	10
OCTAVIA OVERCOME BY VIRGIL'S VERSES, ...	*Jean Ingres*	14
VIRGIL, HORACE, AND VARIUS AT THE HOUSE OF MÆCENAS,	*Ch. F. Jalabert*	18
CHAUCER AND THE CANTERBURY PILGRIMS, ...	*Corbould*	32
TASSO AND THE TWO ELEANORS, ...	*F. Barth*	36
SHAKESPEARE ARRESTED FOR DEER-STEALING, ...	*J. Schrader*	46
OLIVER CROMWELL VISITS JOHN MILTON, ...	*David Neal*	62
DE FOE IN THE PILLORY, ...	*Eyre Crowe*	74
DR. JOHNSON'S PENANCE, ...	*Adrian Stokes*	100
THE DEATH OF CHATTERTON, THE YOUNG POET, . . .	*H. Wallis*	110
BURNS AND HIGHLAND MARY, ...		114
SCHILLER PRESENTED TO THE PRINCESS OF SAXE-WEIMAR,	*Mes*	120
GOETHE AND FREDERIKE, ...	*Hermann Kaulbach*	124
SIR WALTER SCOTT AT ABBOTSFORD, ...	*Sir William Allan*	134
CARLYLE AT CHELSEA, ...	*Mrs. Allingham*	158
TENNYSON IN HIS LIBRARY, ...	*Roberts*	184

ARTISTS AND AUTHORS

Art is the child of nature; yes,
Her darling child in whom we trace
The features of the mother's face,
Her aspect and her attitude.
—LONGFELLOW.

HOMER

BY WILLIAM EWART GLADSTONE

(ABOUT 1000 B.C.)

THE poems of Homer differ from all other known poetry in this, that they constitute in themselves an encyclopædia of life and knowledge at a time when knowledge, indeed, such as lies beyond the bounds of actual experience, was extremely limited, but when life was singularly fresh, vivid, and expansive. The only poems of Homer we possess are the "Iliad" and the "Odyssey," for the Homeric hymns and other productions lose all title to stand in line with these wonderful works, by reason of conflict in a multitude of particulars with the witness of the text, as well as of their poetical inferiority. They evidently belong to the period that follows the great migration into Asia Minor, brought about by the Dorian conquest.

The dictum of Herodotus, which places the date of Homer four hundred years before his own, therefore in the ninth century B.C., was little better than mere conjecture. Common opinion has certainly presumed him to be posterior to the Dorian conquest. The "Hymn to Apollo," however, which was the main prop of this opinion, is assuredly not his. In a work which attempts to turn recent discovery to account, I have contended that the fall of Troy cannot properly be brought lower than about 1250 B.C., and that Homer may probably have lived within fifty years of it.

The entire presentation of life and character in the two poems is distinct from, and manifestly anterior to, anything made known to us in Greece under and after that conquest. The study of Homer has been darkened and enfeebled by thrusting backward into it a vast mass of matter belonging to these later periods, and even to the Roman civilization, which was different in spirit and which entirely lost sight of the true position of Greeks and Trojans and inverted their moral as well as their martial relations. The name of Greeks is a Roman name; the people to whom Homer has given immortal fame are Achaians, both in designation and in manners. The poet paints them at a time when the spirit of national life was rising within their borders. Its first efforts had been seen in the expeditions of Achaian natives to conquer the Asiatic or Egyptian immigrants who had, under the name of Cadmeians (etymologically, "foreigners"), founded Thebes in Bœotia, and in the voyage of the ship Argo to Colchis, which was probably the seat of a colony sprung from the Egyptian empire, and was therefore regarded as hostile in memory of the antecedent aggressions of that empire. The expedition against Troy was the beginning of the long chain of conflicts between Europe and Asia, which end with the Turkish conquests and with the reaction of the last three hundred years, and especially of the nineteenth century, against them. It represents an effort truly enormous toward attaining nationality in idea and in practice. Clearing away obstructions, of which the cause has been partially indicated, we must next observe that the text of Homer was never studied by the moderns as a whole in a searching manner until within the last two generations. From the time of Wolf there was infinite controversy about the works and the authorship, with little positive result, except the establishment of the fact that they were not written but handed down by memory, an operation aided and methodized by the high position of bards as such in Greece (more properly Achaia, and afterward Hellas), by the formation of a separate school to hand down these particular songs, and by the great institution of the Games at a variety of points in the country. At these centres there were public recitations even before the poems were composed, and the uncertainties of individual memory were limited and corrected by competition carried on in a presence of a people eminently endowed with the literary faculty, and by the vast national importance of handing down faithfully a record which was the chief authority touching the religion, history, political divisions, and manners of the country. Many diversities of text arose, but there was thus a continual operation, a corrective as well as a disintegrating process.

The Germans, who had long been occupied in framing careful monographs which contracted the contents of the Homeric text on many particulars, such as the Ship, the House, and so forth, have at length supplied, in the work of Dr. E. Buchholz, a full and methodical account of the contents of the text. This work would fill in English not less than six octavo volumes.

The Greeks called the poet *poietes*, the "maker," and never was there such a maker as Homer. The work, not exclusively, but yet pre-eminently his, was the making of a language, a religion, and a nation. The last named of these was his dominant idea, and to it all his methods may be referred. Of the first he may have been little conscious while he wrought in his office as a bard, which was to give delight.

Careful observation of the text exhibits three powerful factors which contribute to the composition of the nation. First, the Pelasgic name is associated with the mass of the people, cultivators of the soil in the Greek peninsula and elsewhere, though not as their uniform designation, for in Crete (for example) they appear in conjunction with Achaians and Dorians, representatives of a higher stock, and with Eteocretans, who were probably anterior occupants. This Pelasgian name commands the sympathy of the poet and his laudatory epithets; but is nowhere used for the higher class or for the entire nation. The other factors take the command. The Achaians are properly the ruling class, and justify their station by their capacity. But there is a third factor also of great power. We know from the Egyptian monuments that Greece had been within the sway of that primitive empire, and that the Phœnicians were its maritime arm, as they were also the universal and apparently exclusive navigators of the Mediterranean. Whatever came over sea to the Achaian land came in connection with the Phœnician name, which was used by Homer in a manner analogous to the use of the word Frank in the Levant during modern times. But as Egyptian and Assyrian knowledge is gradually opened up to us we learn by degrees that Phœnicia conveyed to Greece Egyptian and Assyrian elements together with her own.

The rich materials of the Greek civilization can almost all be traced to this medium of conveyance from the East and South. Great families which stand in this association were founded in Greece and left their mark upon the country. It is probable that they may have exercised in the first instance a power delegated from Egypt, which they retained after her influence had passed away. Building, metal-working, navigation, ornamental arts, natural knowledge, all carry the Phœnician impress. This is the third of the great factors which were combined and evolved in the wonderful nationality of Greece, a power as vividly felt at this hour as it was three thousand years ago. But if Phœnicia conveyed the seed, the soil was Achaian, and on account of its richness that peninsula surpassed, in its developments of human nature and action, the southern and eastern growths. An Achaian civilization was the result, full of freshness and power, in which usage had a great sacredness, religion was a moral spring of no mean force, slavery though it existed was not associated with cruelty, the worst extremes of sin had no place in the life of the people, liberty had an informal but very real place in public institutions, and manners reached to much refinement; while on the other hand, fierce passion was not abated by conventional restraints, slaughter and bondage were the usual results of war, the idea of property was but very partially defined, and though there were strong indeterminate sentiments of right there is no word in Homer signifying law. Upon the whole, though a very imperfect, it was a wonderful and noble nursery of manhood.

It seems clear that this first civilization of the peninsula was sadly devastated by the rude hands of the Dorian conquest. Institutions like those of Lycurgus could not have been grafted upon the Homeric manners; and centuries elapsed before there emerged from the political ruin a state of things favorable to refinement and to progress in the Greece of history; which though in so many respects of an unequalled splendor, yet had a less firm hold than the Achaian time upon some of the highest social and moral ideas. For example, the position of women had greatly declined, liberty was perhaps less largely conceived, and the tie between religion and morality was more evidently sundered..

After this sketch of the national existence which Homer described, and to the consolidation of which he powerfully ministered, let us revert to the state in which he found and left the elements of a national religion. A close observation of the poems pretty clearly shows us that the three races which combined to form the nation had each of them their distinct religious traditions. It is also plain enough that with this diversity there had been antagonism. As sources illustrative of these propositions which lie at the base of all true comprehension of the religion—which may be called Olympian from its central seat—I will point to the numerous signs of a system of nature-worship as prevailing among the Pelasgian masses; to the alliance in the war between the nature-powers and the Trojans as against the loftier Hellenic mythology; to the legend in Iliad, i., 396–412, of the great war in heaven, which symbolically describes the collision on earth between the ideas which were locally older and those beginning to surmount them; and, finally, to the traditions extraneous to the poems of competitions between different deities for the local allegiance of the people at different spots, such as Corinth, to which Phœnician influence had brought the Poseidon-worship before Homer's time, and Athens, which somewhat later became peculiarly the seat of mixed races. I have spoken of nature-worship as the Pelasgian contribution to the composite Olympian religion. In the Phœnician share we find, as might be expected, both Assyrian and Egyptian elements. The best indication we possess of the Hellenic function is that given by the remarkable prayer of Achilles to Zeus in Iliad, xvi., 233–248. This prayer on the sending forth of Patroclus is the hinge of the whole action of the poem, and is preceded by a long introduction (220–232) such as we nowhere else find. The tone is monotheistic; no partnership of gods appears in it; and the immediate servants of Zeus are described as interpreters, not as priests. From several indications it may be gathered that the Hellenic system was less priestly than the Troic. It seems to have been an especial office of Homer to harmonize and combine these diverse elements, and his Thearchy is as remarkable a work of art as the terrestrial machinery of the poem. He has profoundly impressed upon it the human likeness often called anthropomorphic, and which supplied the basis of Greek art. He has repelled on all sides from his classical and central system the cult of nature and of animals, but it is probable that they kept their place in the local worships of the country. His Zeus is to a considerable extent a monarch, while Poseidon and several other deities bear evident marks of having had no superior at earlier epochs or in the countries of their origin. He arranges them partly as a family, partly as a commonwealth. The gods properly Olympian correspond with the Boulê or council upon earth, while the orders of less exalted spirits are only summoned on great occasions. He indicates twenty as the number of Olympian gods proper, following in this the Assyrian idea. But they were far from holding an equal place in his estimation. For a deity such as Aphrodite brought from the East, and intensely tainted with sensual passions, he indicates aversion and contempt. But for Apollo, whose cardinal idea is that of obedience to Zeus, and for Athene, who represents a profound working wisdom that never fails of its end, he has a deep reverence. He assorts and distributes religious traditions with reference to the great ends he had to pursue; carefully, for example, separating Apollo from the sun, with which he bears marks of having been in other systems identified. Of his other greater gods it may be said that the dominant idea is in Zeus policy, in Here nationality, and in Poseidon physical force. His Trinity, which is conventional, and his Under-world appear to be borrowed from Assyria, and in some degree from Egypt. One licentious legend appears in Olympus, but this belongs to the Odyssey, and to a Phœnician, not a Hellenic, circle of ideas. His Olympian assembly is, indeed, largely representative of human appetites, tastes, and passions; but in the government of the world it works as a body on behalf of justice, and the suppliant and the stranger are peculiarly objects of the care of Zeus. Accordingly, we find that the cause which is to triumph in the Trojan war is the just cause; that in the Odyssey the hero is led through suffering to peace and prosperity, and that the terrible retribution he inflicts has been merited by crime. At various points of the system we trace the higher traditions of religion, and on passing down to the classical period we find that the course of the mythology has been a downward course.

The Troic as compared with the Achaian manners are to a great extent what we should now call Asiatic as distinguished from European. Of the great chieftains, Achilles, Diomed, Ajax, Menelaos, and Patroclus appear chiefly to exhibit the Achaian ideal of humanity; Achilles, especially, and on a colossal scale. Odysseus, the many-sided man, has a strong Phœnician tinge, though the dominant color continues to be Greek. And in his house we find exhibited one of the noblest among the characteristics of the poems in the sanctity and perpetuity of marriage. Indeed, the purity and loyalty of Penelope are, like the humility approaching to penitence of Helen, quite unmatched in antiquity.

The plot of the Iliad has been the subject of much criticism, on account of the long absence of Achilles, the hero, from the action of the poem. But Homer had to bring out Achaian character in its various forms, and while the vastness of Achilles is on the stage, every other Achaian hero must be eclipsed. Further, Homer was an itinerant minstrel, who had to adapt himself to the sympathies and traditions of the different portions of the country. Peloponnesus was the seat of power, and its chiefs acquired a prominent position in the Iliad by what on the grounds we may deem a skilful arrangement. But most skilful of all is the fine adjustment of the balance as between Greek and Trojan warriors. It will be found on close inspection of details that the Achaian chieftains have in truth a vast military superiority; yet by the use of infinite art, Homer has contrived that the Trojans shall play the part of serious and considerable antagonists, so far that with divine aid and connivance they reduce the foe to the point at which the intervention of Achilles becomes necessary for their deliverance, and his supremacy as an exhibition of colossal manhood is thoroughly maintained.

The plot of the Odyssey is admitted to be consecutive and regular in structure. There are certain differences in the mythology which have been made a ground for supposing a separate authorship. But, in the first place, this would do nothing to explain them; in the second, they find their natural explanation in observing that the scene of the wanderings is laid in other lands, beyond the circle of Achaian knowledge and tradition, and that Homer modifies his scheme to meet the ethnical variations as he gathered them from the trading navigators of Phœnicia, who alone could have supplied him with the information required for his purpose.

That information was probably colored more or less by ignorance and by fraud. But we can trace in it the sketch of an imaginary voyage to the northern regions of Europe, and it has some remarkable features of internal evidence, supported by the facts, and thus pointing to its genuineness. In latitudes not described as separate we have reports of the solar day apparently contradictory. In one case there is hardly any night, so that the shepherd might earn double wages. In the other, cloud and darkness almost shut out the day. But we now know both of these statements to have a basis of solid truth on the Norwegian coast to the northward, at the different seasons of the midnight sun in summer, and of Christmas, when it is not easy to read at noon.

The value of Homer as a recorder of antiquity, as opening a large and distinct chapter of primitive knowledge, is only now coming by degrees into view, as the text is more carefully examined and its parts compared, and as other branches of ancient study are developed, especially as in Assyria and Egypt, and by the remarkable discoveries of Dr. Schliemann at Hissarlik and in Greece. But the appreciation of him as a poet has never failed, though it is disappointing to find that a man so great as Aristophanes should describe him simply as the bard of battles, and sad to think that in many of the Christian centuries his works should have slumbered without notice in hidden repositories. His place among the greatest poets of the world, whom no one supposes to be more than three or four in number, has never been questioned. Considering him as anterior to all literary aids and training, he is the most remarkable phenomenon among them all. It may be well to specify some of the points that are peculiarly his own. One of them is the great simplicity of the structure of his mind. With an incomparable eye for the world around him in all things, great and small, he is abhorrent of everything speculative and abstract, and what may be called philosophies have no place in his works, almost the solitary exception being that he employs thought as an illustration of the rapidity of the journey of a deity. He is, accordingly, of all poets the most simple and direct. He is also the most free and genial in the movement of his verse; grateful nature seems to give to him

COOMANS PINXIT.

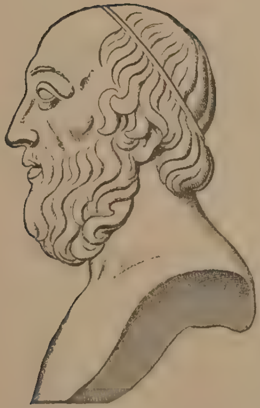
HOMER RECITING THE ILIAD.

spontaneously the perfection to which great men like Virgil and Milton had to attain only by effort intense and sustained. In the high office of drawing human character in its multitude of forms and colors he seems to have no serious rival except Shakespeare. We call him an epic poet, but he is instinct from beginning to end with the spirit of the drama, while we find in him the seeds and rudiments even of its form. His function as a reciting minstrel greatly aided him herein. Again, he had in his language an instrument unrivalled for its facility, suppleness, and versatility, for the large range of what would in music be called its register, so that it embraced every form and degree of human thought, feeling, and emotion, and clothed them all, from the lowest to the loftiest, from the slightest to the most intense and concentrated, in the dress of exactly appropriate style and language. His metre also is a perfect vehicle of the language. If we think the range of his knowledge limited, yet it was all that his country and his age possessed, and it was very greatly more than has been supposed by readers that dwelt only on the surface. So long as the lamp of civilization shall not have ceased to burn, the Iliad and the Odyssey must hold their forward place among the brightest treasures of our race.

PLATO

Extracts from "Plato," by GEORGE GROTE, F.R.S.

(427–347 B.C.)



Of Plato's biography we can furnish nothing better than a faint outline. We are not fortunate enough to possess the work on Plato's life composed by his companion and disciple, Xenocrates, like the life of Plotinus by Porphyry, or that of Proclus by Marinus. Though Plato lived eighty years, enjoying extensive celebrity, and though Diogenes Laertius employed peculiar care in collecting information about him, yet the number of facts recounted is very small, and of those facts a considerable proportion is poorly attested.

Plato was born at Ægina (in which island his father enjoyed an estate as clêrouch or out-settled citizen) in the month Thargelion (May), of the year B.C. 427. His family, belonging to the Dême Collytus, was both ancient and noble, in the sense attached to that word at Athens. He was son of Ariston (or, according to some admirers, of the God Apollo) and Perictionê; his maternal ancestors had been intimate friends or relatives of the law-giver Solon, while his father belonged to a gens tracing its descent from Codrus, and even from the God Poseidon. He was also nearly related to Charmides and to

Critias—this last the well-known and violent leader among the oligarchy called the Thirty Tyrants. Plato was first called Aristoclês, after his grandfather, but received when he grew up the name of Plato, on account of the breadth (we are told) either of his forehead or of his shoulders. Endowed with a robust physical frame, and exercised in gymnastics, not merely in one of the palæstræ of Athens (which he describes graphically in the Charmides), but also under an Argeian trainer, he attained such force and skill as to contend (if we may credit Dicæarchus) for the prize of wrestling among boys at the Isthmian festival. His literary training was commenced under a schoolmaster named Dionysius, and pursued under Draco, a celebrated teacher of music in the large sense then attached to that word. He is said to have displayed both diligence and remarkable quickness of apprehension, combined too with the utmost gravity and modesty. He not only acquired great familiarity with the poets, but composed poetry of his own—dithyrambic, lyric, and tragic; and he is even reported to have prepared a tragic tetralogy, with the view of competing for victory at the Dionysian festival. We are told that he burned these poems, when he attached himself to the society of Socrates. No compositions in verse remain under his name, except a few epigrams—amatory, affectionate, and of great poetical beauty. But there is ample proof in his dialogues that the cast of his mind was essentially poetical. Many of his philosophical speculations are nearly allied to poetry and acquire their hold upon the mind rather through imagination and sentiment than through reason or evidence.

According to Diogenes (who on this point does not cite his authority), it was about the twentieth year of Plato's age (407 B.C.) that his acquaintance with Socrates began. It may possibly have begun earlier, but certainly not later, since at the time of the conversation (related by Xenophon) between Socrates and Plato's younger brother Glaucon, there was already a friendship established between Socrates and Plato; and that time can hardly be later than 406 B.C., or the beginning of 405 B.C. From 406 B.C. down to 399 B.C., when Socrates was tried and condemned, Plato seems to have remained in friendly relation and society with him, a relation perhaps interrupted during the severe political struggles between 405 B.C. and 403 B.C., but revived and strengthened after the restoration of the democracy in the last-mentioned year.

Whether Plato ever spoke with success in the public assembly we do not know; he is said to have been shy by nature, and his voice was thin and feeble, ill adapted for the Pnyx. However, when the oligarchy of Thirty was established, after the capture and subjugation of Athens, Plato was not only relieved from the necessity of addressing the assembled people, but also obtained additional facilities for rising into political influence, through Critias (his near relative) and Charmides, leading men among the new oligarchy. Plato affirms that he had always disapproved the antecedent democracy, and that he entered on the new scheme of government with full hope of seeing justice and wisdom predominant. He was soon undeceived. The government of the Thirty proved a sanguinary and rapacious tyranny, filling him with disappointment and disgust.

He was especially revolted by their treatment of Socrates, whom they not only interdicted from continuing his habitual colloquy with young men, but even tried to implicate in nefarious murders, by ordering him along with others to arrest Leon the Salaminian, one of their intended victims; an order which Socrates, at the peril of his life, disobeyed.

Thus mortified and disappointed, Plato withdrew from public functions. What part he took in the struggle between the oligarchy and its democratical assailants under Thrasybulus we are not informed. But when the democracy was re-established his political ambition revived and he again sought to acquire some active influence on public affairs. Now, however, the circumstances had become highly unfavorable to him. The name of his deceased relative, Critias, was generally abhorred, and he had no powerful partisans among the popular leaders. With such disadvantages, with anti-democratical sentiments, and with a thin voice, we cannot wonder that Plato soon found public life repulsive, though he admits the remarkable moderation displayed by the restored Demos. His repugnance was aggravated to the highest pitch of grief and indignation by the trial and condemnation of Socrates (399 B.C.) four years after the renewal of the democracy. At that moment doubtless the Socratic men or companions were unpopular in a body. Plato, after having yielded his best sympathy and aid at the trial of Socrates, retired along with several others of them to Megara. He made up his mind that for a man of his views and opinions it was not only unprofitable, but also unsafe, to embark in active public life, either at Athens or in any other Grecian city. He resolved to devote himself to philosophical speculation and to abstain from practical politics, unless fortune should present to him some exceptional case of a city prepared to welcome and obey a renovator upon exalted principles.

At Megara Plato passed some time with the Megarian Eucleides, his fellow-disciple in the society of Socrates and the founder of what is termed the Megaric school of philosophers. He next visited Cyrênê, where he is said to have become acquainted with the geometrician Theodôrus and to have studied geometry under him. From Cyrênê he proceeded to Egypt, interesting himself much in the antiquities of the country as well as in the conversation of the priests. In or about 394 B.C., if we may trust the statement of Aristoxenus about the military service of Plato at Corinth, he was again at Athens. He afterward went to Italy and Sicily, seeking the society of the Pythagorean philosophers, Archytas, Echecrates, Timæus, etc., at Tarentum and Locri, and visiting the volcanic manifestations of Ætna. It appears that his first visit to Sicily was made when he was about forty years of age, which would be 387 B.C. Here he made acquaintance with the youthful Dion, over whom he acquired great intellectual ascendancy. By Dion Plato was prevailed upon to visit the elder Dionysius at Syracuse; but that despot, offended by the free spirit of his conversation and admonitions, dismissed him with displeasure, and even caused him to be sold into slavery at Ægina on his voyage home. Though really sold, however, Plato was speedily ransomed by friends. After farther incurring some risk of his life as an

Athenian citizen, in consequence of the hostile feelings of the Æginetans, he was conveyed away safely to Athens, about 386 B.C.

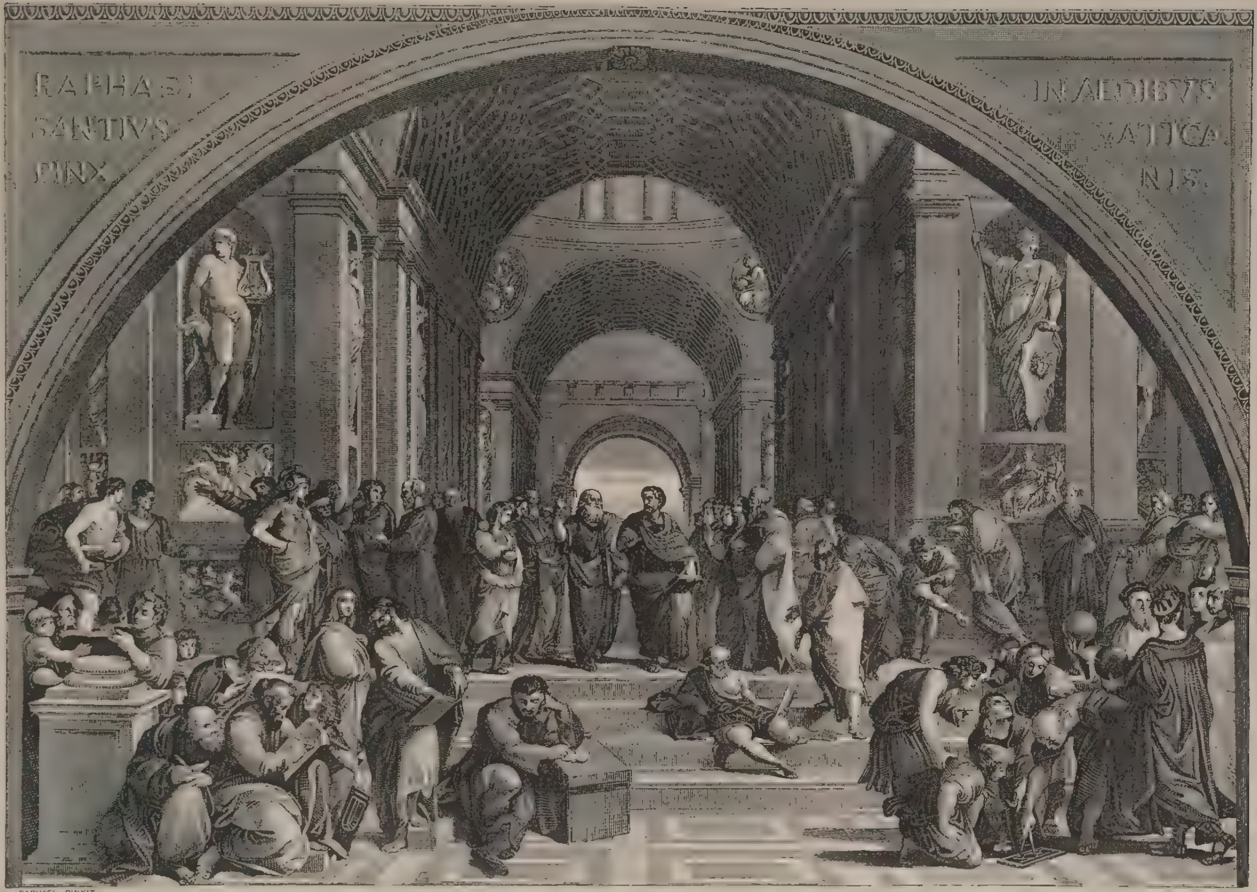
It was at this period, about 386 B.C., that the continuous and formal public teaching of Plato, constituting as it does so great an epoch in philosophy, commenced. But I see no ground for believing, as many authors assume, that he was absent from Athens during the entire interval between 399–386 B.C.

The spot selected by Plato for his lectures or teaching was a garden adjoining the precinct sacred to the hero Hecadêmus or Acedêmus, distant from the gate of Athens called Dipylon somewhat less than a mile, on the road to Eleusis, toward the north. In this precinct there were both walks, shaded by trees, and a gymnasium for bodily exercise; close adjoining, Plato either inherited or acquired a small dwelling-house and garden, his own private property. Here, under the name of the Academy, was founded the earliest of those schools of philosophy, which continued for centuries forward to guide and stimulate the speculative minds of Greece and Rome.

We have scarce any particulars respecting the growth of the School of Athens from this time to the death of Plato, in 347 B.C. We only know generally that his fame as a lecturer became eminent and widely diffused; that among his numerous pupils were included Speusippus, Xenocrates, Aristotle, Demosthenes, Hyperides, Lycurgus, etc.; that he was admired and consulted by Perdiccas in Macedonia, and Dionysius at Syracuse; that he was also visited by listeners and pupils from all parts of Greece.

It was in the year 367–366 that Plato was induced, by the earnest entreaties of Dion, to go from Athens to Syracuse, on a visit to the younger Dionysius, who had just become despot, succeeding to his father of the same name. Dionysius II., then very young, had manifested some disposition toward philosophy and prodigious admiration for Plato, who was encouraged by Dion to hope that he would have influence enough to bring about an amendment or thorough reform of the government at Syracuse. This ill-starred visit, with its momentous sequel, has been described in my "History of Greece." It not only failed completely, but made matters worse rather than better; Dionysius became violently alienated from Dion and sent him into exile. Though turning a deaf ear to Plato's recommendations, he nevertheless liked his conversation, treated him with great respect, detained him for some time at Syracuse, and was prevailed upon, only by the philosopher's earnest entreaties, to send him home. Yet in spite of such uncomfortable experience, Plato was induced, after a certain interval, again to leave Athens and pay a second visit to Dionysius, mainly in hopes of procuring the restoration of Dion. In this hope, too, he was disappointed, and was glad to return, after a longer stay than he wished, to Athens.

The visits of Plato to Dionysius were much censured and his motives misrepresented by unfriendly critics, and these reproaches were still further embittered by the entire failure of his hopes. The closing years of his long life were saddened by the disastrous turn of events at Syracuse, aggravated by the discreditable abuse of power and violent death of his intimate friend, Dion, which



RAPHAEL PINXIT.

THE SCHOOL OF ATHENS.

brought dishonor both upon himself and upon the Academy. Nevertheless, he lived to the age of eighty, and died in 348–347 B.C., leaving a competent property, which he bequeathed by a will still extant. But his foundation, the Academy, did not die with him. It passed to his nephew Speusippus, who succeeded him as teacher, conductor of the school, or scholarch, and was himself succeeded after eight years by Xenocrates of Chalcêdon; while another pupil of the Academy, Aristotle, after an absence of some years from Athens, returned thither and established a school of his own at the Lyceum, at another extremity of the city.

The latter half of Plato's life in his native city must have been one of dignity and consideration, though not of any political activity. He is said to have addressed the Dicastery as an advocate for the accused general Chabrias; and we are told that he discharged the expensive and showy functions of Chôregus with funds supplied by Dion. Out of Athens also his reputation was very great. When he went to the Olympic festival of B.C. 360 he was an object of conspicuous attention and respect; he was visited by hearers, young men of rank and ambition, from the most distant Hellenic cities.

Such is the sum of our information respecting Plato. Scanty as it is we have not even the advantage of contemporary authority for any portion of it. We have no description of Plato from any contemporary author, friendly or adverse. It will be seen that after the death of Socrates we know nothing about Plato as a man and a citizen, except the little which can be learned from his few epistles, all written when he was very old and relating almost entirely to his peculiar relations with Dion and Dionysius. His dialogues, when we try to interpret them collectively, and gather from them general results as to the character and purposes of the author, suggest valuable arguments and perplexing doubts, but yield few solutions. In no one of the dialogues does Plato address us in his own person. In the Apology alone (which is not a dialogue) is he alluded to even as present; in the Phædon he is mentioned as absent from illness. Each of the dialogues, direct or indirect, is conducted from beginning to end by the persons whom he introduces. Not one of the dialogues affords any positive internal evidence showing the date of its composition. In a few there are allusions to prove that they must have been composed at a period later than others, or later than some given event of known date; but nothing more can be positively established. Nor is there any good extraneous testimony to determine the date of any one among them; for the remark ascribed to Socrates about the dialogue called Lysis (which remark, if authentic, would prove the dialogue to have been composed during the lifetime of Socrates) appears altogether untrustworthy. And the statement of some critics, that the Phædrus was Plato's earliest composition, is clearly nothing more than an inference (doubtful at best, and in my judgment erroneous) from its dithyrambic style and erotic subject.

VIRGIL

(70–19 B.C.)

Next to Homer on the roll of the world's epic poets stands the name of Virgil. Acknowledged by all as the greatest of Roman poets, he entered, as no other Roman writer did, into Christian history and mediæval legend. Constantine, the first Christian emperor, professed to have been converted by the perusal of one of Virgil's "Eclogues," and Dante owned him as his master and model, and his guide through all the circles of the other world, while Italian tradition still regards him a great necromancer, a prophet, and a worker of miracles. From the date of his death till to-day, in every country, his works have been among the commonest of school-books, and editions, commentaries and translations are countless.

Publius Vergilius Maro—for the manuscripts and inscriptions of antiquity spell his name Vergilius, not Virgilius, as is customary—was born near the present city of Mantua, in Upper Italy, in the year 70 B.C., at a little village called Andes, which has been identified with the modern Italian hamlet of Pietola. At the time of his birth this region was not included in the term "Italy," but was a part of Cisalpine Gaul, where the inhabitants did not obtain Roman citizenship till the year B.C. 49. Thus the writer whose greatest work is devoted to immortalizing the glories of Rome and the deeds of its founder, was not a Roman by birth, and was over twenty before he became a citizen.

His father seems to have been in possession of a small property at Andes which he cultivated himself, and where the poet acquired his love for nature, and the intimate practical acquaintance with farm labors and farm management, which he used so effectively in his most carefully polished work, his "Georgics." His first education was received at the town of Cremona, and the larger city of Milan, and he was at the former place in his sixteenth year on the day when the poet Lucretius died.

Greek in those days was not only the language of poetry and philosophy, but the language of polite society and commercial usage. It was the common medium of communication throughout the Roman world, and a knowledge of it was indispensable. Hence, after studying his native language in Northern Italy, Virgil was sent to Naples, a city founded by Greeks, and possessing a large Greek population. Here he studied under Parthenius for some time, and then proceeded to Rome, where he had as his instructor, Syron, a member of the Epicurean school, of whose doctrines Virgil's poems bear some traces.

Rome, however, offered no career to a youth who was not yet a citizen, and Virgil seems to have returned to his paternal farm, and there probably he composed some of his smaller pieces, which bear marks of juvenile taste. Among those that have been assigned to this early part of his life, is one of considerable interest to Americans, for in it occurs our national motto, "*E pluribus unum.*" The short poem—it consists of only one hundred and twenty-three lines—describes how a negro serving-woman makes a dish called *Moretum*, a kind of salad, in which various herbs are blended with oil and vinegar, till "out of many one united whole" is produced. To the same period critics have assigned his poem on a "Mosquito," and some epigrams in various metres. The home in the country had, however, soon to experience, like thousands of others, a sad change. The battle of Philippi took place, and Marc Antony and Octavius Cæsar, the future emperor, known to later ages as Augustus, were masters of the world. We have no hints that Virgil had been, like Horace, engaged in the civil war in a military or any other capacity, or that his father had taken any part in the struggle, but the country in which his property lay was marked out for confiscation. The city of Cremona had strongly sympathized with the cause of Brutus and the republic, and in consequence, the doctrine that "to the victors belong the spoils," having a very practical application in those days, its territory was seized and divided among the victorious soldiers, and with it was taken part of the territory of its neighbor, Mantua, including Virgil's little farm. According to report the new occupier was an old soldier, named Claudius, and it was added that by the advice of Asinius Pollio, the governer of the province, Virgil applied to the young Octavius for restitution of the property. The request was granted, and Virgil, in gratitude, wrote his first "Eclogue," to commemorate the generosity of the emperor. These facts, if at all true, indicate that the young poet had already become favorably known to men of high position and great influence. Pollio was eminent not only as a soldier and statesman who played an important part in politics, but as an orator, a poet, and an historian, and above all as an encourager of literature. It was a fortunate day when a governor of such power to aid, and such taste to recognize talent, discovered the young poet of Andes, and saved him from a life of struggling poverty. Virgil's health was always feeble, and his temper seems to have been rather melancholy; he had had little experience of life except in his remote country town, and would, we may plausibly conjecture, have succumbed in a contest from which the more worldly-wise Horace emerged in triumph.

Pollio remained a steadfast friend, and Augustus and Mæcenas took him under their protection. He was on terms of close intimacy with the latter, and introduced Horace to that great minister and patron of letters. The two poets were close friends, and Horace mentions Virgil as being in the party which accompanied Mæcenas from Rome to Brundisium about the year 41 B.C. Between 41 B.C. and 37 B.C,, he composed, as already stated, his "Eclogues" or "Bucolics." In these idylls we find many simple and natural touches, great beauty of metre and language, and numerous allusions to the persons and circumstances of the time. The fourth of these ten short poems is dedicated to Pollio, and is to be noted as the one quoted by Constantine as leading to his conversion to Christianity. "It is bucolic only in name, it is allegorical," writes George Long, "mystical, half historical, and prophetical, enigmatical, anything in fact but bucolic." The best-known imitation of his idyll is Pope's "Messiah." Pleasing as all these poems are, they do not represent rural life in Italy, they are in most part but echoes of Theocritus.

It is to the suggestion of Mæcenas that we owe Virgil's most perfect poem, his "Georgics," which he commenced after the publication of the "Bucolics." To suppose these four books of verses on soils, fruit-trees, horses and cattle, and finally on bees, as a practical treatise to guide and instruct the farmer, is absurd. Few farmers have time or inclination to read so elaborate a work. It is probable that Mæcenas, while recognizing the talent of the "Bucolics," saw likewise the unreality of their pictures of life, and gave him the subject of the "Georgics" as being in the same line as that the poet seemed to have chosen for himself, and yet as less liable to lead to imitations and pilferings from Greek originals. In fact there was no work that he could follow. In this work we find great improvement in both taste and versification, and the rather uninviting subject is treated and embellished in a way that makes his fame rest in great part on the poem. The fourth book, especially, with its episode of Orpheus and Eurydice will live forever for its plaintive tenderness. The work was completed at Naples, after the battle of Actium, 31 B.C., while Augustus was in the East.

In B.C. 27 the emperor was in Spain, and thence he addressed a request to let him have some monument of his poetical talent, to celebrate the emperor's name as he had done that of Mæcenas. Virgil replied in a brief letter, saying, "As regards my 'Æneas,' if it were worth your listening to, I would willingly send it. But so vast is the undertaking that I almost appear to myself to have commenced it from some defect in understanding; especially since, as you know, other and far more important studies are needed for such a work." In the year B.C. 24, we learn from the poet Propertius, that Virgil was then busy at the task, and in all probability the former may have heard it read by its author. The old Latin commentators preserve several striking notices of Virgil's habit of reading or reciting his poems, both while he was composing them and after they were completed, and especially of the remarkable beauty and charm of the poet's rendering of his own words and its powerful effect upon his hearers. "He read," says Suetonius, "at once with sweetness and with a wonderful fascination;" and Seneca had a story of the poet Julius Montanus saying that he himself would attempt to steal something from Virgil if he could first borrow his voice, his elocution, and his dramatic power in reading; for the very same lines, said he, which

INGRES PINXIT.

OCTAVIA OVERCOME BY VIRGIL'S VERSES.

when the author himself read them sounded well, without him were empty and dumb. He read to Augustus the whole of his "Georgics," and on another occasion three books of the "Æneid," the second, the fourth, and the sixth, the last with an effect upon Octavia not to be forgotten, for she was present at the reading, and at those great lines about her own son and his premature death, which begin "*Tu Marcellus eris*," it is said that she fainted away and was with difficulty recovered. She rewarded the poet munificently for this tribute to her son's memory. For three years longer he worked steadily on the poem, and in B.C. 19 he resolved to go to Greece and devote three entire years to polishing and finishing the work. He got as far as Athens, where he met Augustus returning from the East, and determined to go back to Italy in his company. He fell ill, however, during a visit to Megara, the voyage between Greece and Italy did not improve his health and he died a few days after landing at Brundisium, in the year B.C. 19. His body was transferred to Naples, and he was buried near the city at Puteoli. By his will he left some property to his friends Varius and Nicca, with the injunction that they should burn the unfinished epic. The injunction was never carried out, by the express command of the emperor, who directed Varius to publish the poem without any additions of any kind. An order carefully executed, for as the "Æneid" stands there are numerous imperfect lines.

This epic poem on the foundation of Rome by a colony from Troy is based on an old Latin tradition, and is modelled on the form of the poems of Homer. The first six books remind the student of the adventures of Ulysses in the "Odyssey," while the last six books, recounting the contest of the Trojan settlers under Æneas with the native inhabitants under their King Latinus, follow the style of the battle-pieces of the "Iliad." The most striking and original part of the plan of the poem is the introduction of Carthage and the Carthaginian queen, on whose coasts Æneas, in defiance of all chronology, is described as suffering shipwreck. The historic conflict between Rome and Carthage, when Hannibal and his cavalry rode from one end of Italy to another, and encamped under the walls of Rome itself, left an indelible impression on the imagination of the Romans. The war with Carthage was to them all that the Arab invasion was to Spain, or the Saracen hordes to Eastern Europe. It was the first great struggle for empire in times of which history holds record, between the East and the West, between the Semitic and Aryan races, and Virgil, with consummate skill, took the opportunity of predicting the future rivalry between Rome and Carthage, and the ultimate triumph of the former power. All through the poem there are allusions to the history of Rome, and to the descent of the Julian house from the great Trojan hero. The hero Æneas, himself, is rather an insipid character, but, on the other hand, Dido is painted with great force, truth, and tenderness. The visit to Carthage gives occasion for the narrative of the fall of Troy in the second and third books, while the sixth book, describing the landing in Italy and the hero's descent to the infernal regions, has been regarded as containing the esoteric teaching of the ancient mysteries, and has influenced deeply the belief of the Christian world. Virgil lived, it may be said, at the parting of the ways. The old gods, who were goodly and glad, had become discredited; the world was no longer young, no longer fresh and fair and hopeful; it had passed through ages of war and misery, it was harassed by doubt, the general feeling was what we would now call pessimistic, and a resigned melancholy, a keen sense of there being something wrong in the universe, can be felt in every line of Virgil, and there are tears in his voice.

In person Virgil was tall, his complexion dark, and his appearance that of a rustic. He was modest, retiring, loyal to his friends. The liberality of Mæcenas and Augustus had enriched him, and he left a considerable property and a house on the Esquiline Hill. He had troops of friends, all the accomplished men of the day; he was quite free from jealousy and envy, and of amiable temper. No one speaks of him except in terms of affection and esteem. He used his wealth liberally, supporting his parents generously, and his father, who became blind in his old age, lived long enough to hear of his son's fame and feel the effects of his prosperity.

HORACE

By J. W. Mackail

(65–8 B.C.)

Quintus Horatius Flaccus [Horace], Latin poet and satirist, was born near Venusia, in Southern Italy, on December 8, 65 B.C. His father was a manumitted slave, who as a collector of taxes or an auctioneer had saved enough money to buy a small estate, and thus belonged to the same class of small Italian freeholders as the parents of Virgil. Apparently Horace was an only child, and as such received an education almost beyond his father's means; who, instead of sending him to school at Venusia, took him to Rome, provided him with the dress and attendance customary among boys of the upper classes, and sent him to the best masters. At seventeen or eighteen he proceeded to Athens, then the chief school of philosophy, and one of the three great schools of oratory, to complete his education; and he was still there when the murder of Julius Cæsar, March 15, 44 B.C., rekindled the flames of civil war.

In the autumn of this year, Brutus, then proprætor of Macedonia, visited Athens while levying troops. Horace joined his side; and such was the scarcity of Roman officers, that though barely twenty-one, and totally without military experience, he was at once given a high commission. He was present at the battle of Philippi, and joined in the general flight that followed the republican defeat; he found his way back to Italy, and apparently was not thought important enough for proscription by the triumvirate. His property, however, had been confiscated, and he found employment in the lower grade of the civil service to gain a livelihood.

It was at this period that poverty, he says, drove him to make verses. His earliest were chiefly satires and personal lampoons; but it was probably from some of his first lyrical pieces, in which he showed a new mastery of the Roman language, that he became known to Varius and Virgil, who in or about 38 B.C. introduced him to Mæcenas, the confidential minister of Octavianus and a munificent patron of art and letters. The friendship thus formed was uninterrupted till the death of Mæcenas, to whose liberality Horace owed release from business and the gift of the celebrated farm among the Sabine Hills.

From this time forward his life was without marked incident. His springs and summers were generally spent at Rome, where he enjoyed the intimacy of nearly all the most prominent men of the time; his autumns at the Sabine farm, or a small villa which he possessed at Tibur; he sometimes passed the winter in the milder seaside air of Baiæ. Mæcenas introduced him to Augustus, who, according to Suetonius, offered him a place in his own household, which the poet prudently declined. But as the unrivalled lyric poet of the time Horace gradually acquired the position of poet-laureate; and his ode written to command for the celebration of the Secular Games in 17 B.C., with the official odes which followed it on the victories of Tiberius and Drusus, and on the glories of the Augustan age, mark the highest level which this kind of poetry has reached.

On November 27, 8 B.C., he died in his fifty-seventh year. Virgil had died eleven years before. Tibullus and Propertius soon after Virgil. Ovid, still a young man, was the only considerable poet whom he left behind; and with his death the Augustan age of Latin poetry ends.

The following is the list of Horace's works arranged according to the dates which have been most plausibly fixed by scholars. Some of the questions of Horatian chronology, however, are still at issue, and to most of the dates now to be given the word "about" should be prefixed.

The first book of Satires ten in number, his earliest publication, appeared 35 B.C. A second volume of eight satires, showing more maturity and finish than the first, was published 30 B.C.; and about the same time the small collection of lyrics in iambic and composite metres, imitated from the Greek of Archilochus, which is known as the Epodes. In 19 B.C., at the age of forty-six, he produced his greatest work, three books of odes, a small volume which represents the long labor of years, and which placed him at once in the front rank of poets. About the same time, whether before or after remains uncertain, is to be placed his incomparable volume of epistles, which in grace, ease, good sense and wit mark as high a level as the odes do in terseness, melody, and exquisite finish. These two works are Horace's great achievement. The remainder of his writings demand but brief notice. They are the "Carmen Seculare;" a fourth book of odes, with all the perfection of style of the others, but showing a slight decline in freshness; and three more epistles, one, that addressed to Florus, the most charming in its lively and graceful ease of all Horace's familiar writings; the other two, somewhat fragmentary essays in literary criticism. One of them, generally known as the "Ars Poetica," was perhaps left unfinished at his death.

In his youth Horace had been an aristocrat, but his choice of sides was perhaps more the result of accident than of conviction, and he afterward acquiesced without great difficulty in the imperial government. His acquiescence was not at first untempered with regret; and in the odes modern critics have found touches of veiled sarcasm against the new monarchy and even a certain sympathy with the abortive conspiracy of Murena in 22 B.C. But as the empire grew stronger and the advantages which it brought became more evident—the repair of the destruction caused by the civil wars, the organization of government, the development of agriculture and commerce, the establishment at home and abroad of the peace of Rome—his tone passes into real enthusiasm for the new order.

Horace professed himself a follower of the doctrines of Epicurus, which he took as a reasonable mean between the harshness of stoicism and the low morality of the Cyrenaics. In his odes, especially those written on public occasions, he uses, as all public men did, the language of the national religion. But both in religion and in philosophy he remains before all things a man of the world; his satire is more of manners and follies than of vice or impiety; and his excellent sense keeps him always to that "golden mean" in which he sums up the lesson of Epicurus. As a critic he shows the same general good sense, but his criticisms do not profess to be original or to go much beneath the surface. In Greek literature he follows Alexandrian taste; in Latin he represents the tendency of his age to undervalue the earlier efforts of the native genius and lay great stress on the technical finish of his own day.

From his own lifetime till now Horace has had a popularity unexampled in literature. A hundred generations who have learned him as school-boys have remembered and returned to him in mature age as to a personal friend. He is one of those rare examples, like Julius Cæsar in politics, of genius which ripens late and leaves the more enduring traces. Up to the age of thirty-five his work is still crude and tentative; afterward it is characterized by a jewel finish, an exquisite sense of language which weighs every word accurately and makes every word inevitable and perfect. He was not a profound thinker; his philosophy is rather that of the market-place than of the schools, he does not move among high ideals or subtle emotions. The romantic note which makes Virgil so magical and prophetic a figure at that turning-point of the world's history has no place in Horace; to gain a universal audience he offers nothing more and noth-

JALABERT PINXT

VIRGIL, HORACE AND VARIUS, AT THE HOUSE OF MÆCENAS.

ing less than what is universal to mankind. Of the common range of thought and feeling he is perfect and absolute master; and in the graver passages of the epistles, as in the sad and noble cadence of his most famous odes, the melancholy temper which underlay his quick and bright humor touches the deepest springs of human nature. Of his style the most perfect criticism was given in the next generation by a single phrase, *Horatii curiosa felicitas;* of no poet can it be more truly said, in the phrase of the Greek dramatist Agathon, that "skill has an affection for luck and luck for skill." His poetry supplies more phrases which have become proverbial than the rest of Latin literature put together. To suggest a parallel in English literature we must unite in thought the excellences of Pope and Gray with the easy wit and cultured grace of Addison.

Horace's historical position in Latin literature is this: on the one hand, he carried on and perfected the native Roman growth, satire, from the ruder essays of Lucilius, so as to make Roman life from day to day, in city and country, live anew under his pen; on the other hand, he naturalized the metres and manner of the great Greek lyric poets, from Alcæus and Sappho downward. Before Horace Latin lyric poetry is represented almost wholly by the brilliant but technically immature poems of Catullus; after him it ceases to exist. For what he made it he claims, in a studied modesty of phrase but with a just sense of his own merits, an immortality to rival that of Rome.

DANTE

By Archdeacon Farrar, D.D., F.R.S.

(1265–1321)

In this paper I will give a rapid sketch of Dante's life, and then will try to point to some of the features of a poem which must ever take its place among the supremest efforts of the human intellect, side by side with Homer's "Iliad," and Virgil's "Æneid," and Milton's "Paradise Lost," and the plays of Shakespeare; and which is not less great than any of these in its immortal and epoch-making significance.

Dante was born in 1265, in the small room of a small house in Florence, still pointed out as the Casa di Dante. His father, Aldighieri, was a lawyer, and belonged to the humbler class of burgher-nobles. The family seems to have changed its name into Alighieri, "the wing-bearers," at a later time, in accordance with the beautiful coat of arms which they adopted—a wing in an azure field. Dante was a devout, beautiful, precocious boy, and his susceptible soul caught a touch of "phantasy and flame" from the sight of Beatrice, daughter of Folco de' Portinari, whom he saw clad in crimson for a festa. From that day the fair girl, with her rosy cheeks, and golden hair, and blue eyes, became to the dreamy boy a vision of angelic beauty, an ideal of saintly purity and truth. But while he cherished this inward love he continued to study under his master, Brunetto Latini, and acquired not only all the best learning, but also all the most brilliant accomplishments of his day. He had never breathed a word of his love to Beatrice; it was of the unselfish, adoring, chivalrous type, which was content to worship in silence. Beatrice was wedded to another, and shortly afterward, in 1289, she died. So far from causing to Dante any self-reproach, he regarded his love for her as the most ennobling and purifying influence of his life—a sort of moral regeneration. Beatrice became to him the type of Theology and Heavenly truth. Nor did his love in any way interfere with the studies or activities of his life. His sonnets early gained him fame as a poet, and the lovely portrait of him—painted by Giotto, on the walls of the Bargello, at the age of twenty-four, side by side with Brunetto Latini and Corso Donati, and holding in his hand a pomegranate, the mystic type of good works—shows that he was already a man of distinction, and a favorite in the upper classes of Florentine society. He began to take an active part in politics, and in 1295 was formally enrolled in the Guild of Physicians and Apothecaries. On June 11, 1289, he fought as a volunteer in the battle of Campaldino. Amid these scenes of ambition and warfare he fell away for a time from his holiest aspirations. From theology he turned to purely human and materialist philosophy; from an ideal of pure love to earthlier defilements. It was perhaps with a desire to aid himself in the struggle against life's temptations that he seems to have become a member of the Tertiary Order of St. Francis of Assisi, for whom he had a passionate admiration. The Tertiaries did not abandon the secular life, but wore the cord of the order, and pledged themselves to lives of sanctity and devotion. Legend says that by his own desire he was buried in the dress of a Franciscan Tertiary. Yet there is evidence that he felt the inefficacy of any external bond. Experience taught him that the serge robe and the binding cord might only be the concealment of the hypocrite; and that they were worse than valueless without the purification of the heart. In the eighth Bolgia of the eighth circle of the "Inferno" he sees the givers of evil counsel, and among them Guido da Montefeltro, who, toward the close of his life had become a Cordelier or Franciscan Friar, hoping to make atonement for his sins. But tempted by Boniface VIII. with a promise of futile absolution, he gave him advice to take the town of Palestrina by "long promises and scant fulfilments." Trusting in the Pope's absolution, and not in the law of God, he was one of those who—

> "Dying put on the weeds of Dominic,
> Or in Franciscan think to pass disguised,"

and believed that St. Francis would draw him up by his cord even from the pit of hell. But when he dies, though St. Francis comes to take him, one of the

Black Cherubim of hell seizes and claims him, truly urging that absolution for an *intended* sin is a contradiction in terms, since absolution assumes penitence. Again, among the hypocrites in the sixth Bolgia, Dante sees men approach in dazzling cloaks, of which the hoods cover their eyes and face, like those worn by the monks of Cologne; but he finds that they are crushing weights of gilded lead—splendid semblance and agonizing, destroying reality. Again, when the two poets, Dante and Virgil, came to the Abyss of Evil-pits (Malebolge), down which the crimson stream of Phlegethon leaps in "a Niagara of blood," he is on the edge of the Circle of Fraud in all its varieties, down which they are to be carried on the back of Geryon, the triple-bodied serpent-monster, who is the type of all human and demonic falsity. And how is that monster to be evoked from the depth? Dante is bidden to take off the cord which girds him—the cord with which he had endeavored in old days to bind the spotted panther of sensual temptation—and to fling it into the void profound. He does so, and the monster, type of the brutal and the human in our nature when both are false, comes swimming and circling up from below. "The outward form"— symbolized by the cord—"when associated with unreality, only attracts the worst symbol of unreality." Once more, ere he begins to climb the steep terraces of the hill of Purgatory and true repentance, he has to be girt with a far different cord, even with a humble rush, the only plant which—because it bows to the billows and the wind—will grow among the beating waves of the sea which surrounds the mountain of Purgatory. That cord of rush is the type, not of outward profession, but of humble sincerity.

Dante, in his characteristic way, does not pause to explain any of these symbols to us. He leaves them to our own thought, but they all point to the one great lesson that God needs not the service of externalism, but the preparation of the heart.

In 1292, probably at the wish of his friends, Dante married Gemma Donati, She bore him seven children in seven years, and there is nothing to show that she was not a true and faithful wife to him, though it is quite probable, from his absolute silence respecting her, that the deepest grounds of sympathy hardly existed between them.

About the time of his marriage he plunged more earnestly into politics, and became one of the Priori of Florence. He felt himself that a change for the worse had passed over his life. It was no longer so pure, so simple, so devout as it once had been. In the year 1300, the year of the Great Jubilee which had been preached by Pope Boniface VIII., he was in the mid-path of life, and was lost, as he allegorically describes it at the beginning of the "Inferno," in a wild and savage wood. He was hindered from ascending the sunny hill of heavenly aims by the speckled panther of sensuality, the gaunt, gray wolf of avaricious selfishness, and the fierce lion of wrath and ambitious pride. But he was restored to hope and effort by a vision of Beatrice, which seems to have come to him before his Easter communion, and fixed in his mind the purpose of writing about Beatrice—in her ideal aspect of Divine Truth—"what never was writ of woman."

As a statesman, Dante, like most of the Florentines, was at this time a Guelph, and an adherent of the papal party, though in later years he became, by mature conviction, a Ghibelline, and placed his hopes for Italy in the intervention of the emperor. The disputes between the Guelphs and Ghibellines were complicated by the party factions of Neri and Bianchi, and by the influence of Dante the leaders of both factions were banished from the city, and among them his dearest friend, Guido Cavalcanti. At this time Pope Boniface encouraged Charles of Valois to enter Florence with an army. Dante resisted the proposal, and was sent as an ambassador to Rome. During his absence a decree of banishment was passed upon him. The Neri faction triumphed. The house of Dante was sacked and burned. He never saw Florence more.

The news of his sentence reached him in Siena, in April, 1302, and from that time began the last sad phases of his life, the long, slow agony of his exile and bitter disappointment. Disillusioned, separated from his wife, his children, the city of his love, he wandered from city to city, disgusted with the baseness alike of Guelphs and Ghibellines, feeling how salt is the bread of exile, and how hard it is to climb another's stairs. "Alas," he says, "I have gone about like a mendicant, showing against my will the wounds with which fortune hath smitten me. I have indeed been a vessel without sail and without rudder, carried to divers shores by the dry wind that springs from poverty." In 1316 he did indeed receive from ungrateful Florence an offer of return, but on the unworthy conditions that he should pay a fine and publicly acknowledge his criminality. He scorned such recompense of his innocence after having suffered exile for well-nigh three lustres. "If," he wrote, "by no honorable way can entrance be found into Florence, there will I never enter. What? Can I not from every corner of the earth behold the sun and the stars? Can I not under every climate of heaven meditate the sweetest truths, except I first make myself a man of ignominy in the face of Florence?"

Looking merely at outward success, men would have called the life of Dante a failure and his career a blighted career. But his misery was the condition of his immortal greatness. He endured for many a year the insults of the foolish and the company of the base, and on earth he did not find the peace for which his heart so sorely yearned. He died in 1321, at the age of fifty-six, of a broken heart, and lies, not at the Florence which he loved, but at Ravenna, near the now blighted pine woods, on the bleak Adrian shore. But if he lost himself he found himself. He achieved his true greatness, not among the bloody squabbles of political intrigue, but in the achievement of his great works, and above all of that "Divine Comedy," which was "the imperishable monument of his love of Beatrice, now identified with Divine Philosophy—his final gift to humanity and offering to God."

On the consummate greatness of that poem as the one full and perfect voice of many silent centuries I only touch, for it would require a volume to elucidate its many-sided significance. It is not one thing, but many things. In one aspect it is an autobiography as faithful as those of St. Augustine or of Rousseau, though transcendently purer and greater. It is a vision, like the "Pilgrim's Progress" of John Bunyan, but written with incomparably wider knowledge and keener insight. It is a soul's history, like Goethe's "Faust," but attaining to a far loftier level of faith and thoughtfulness and moral elevation. It is a divine poem, like Milton's "Paradise Lost," dealing, as Milton does, with God and Satan, and heaven and hell, but of wider range and intenser utterance. With the plays of Shakespeare, in their oceanic and myriad-minded variety, it can hardly be compared, because it originated under conditions so widely different, and was developed in an environment so strangely dissimilar. It is, moreover, one poem, while they form a multitude of dramas. But few would hesitate to admit that in reading Dante we are face to face with a soul, if less gifted yet less earthly than that of Shakespeare; a soul which "was like a star and dwelt apart"—

> "Soul awful, if this world has ever held
> An awful soul."

I would urge all who are unacquainted with Dante to read, or rather to study, him at once. They could study no more ennobling teacher. If they are unfamiliar with Italian, they may read the faithful prose version of the "Inferno" by John Carlyle, of the "Purgatorio" and "Paradiso," by A. J. Butler, or the translations by Cary in blank verse, and the Dean of Wells in *terza rima*. If they desire to begin with some general introduction, they may read the fine essays by Dean Church and Mr. Lowell (in "Among my Books") and the excellent "Shadow of Dante," by Maria Rosetti. To such books, or to those of Mrs. Oliphant and others, I must refer the reader for all details respecting the structure of the poem which he called the "Divine Comedy." The name "Comedy" must not mislead any one. The poem is far too stately, intense, and terrible for humor of any kind. It was only called "Commedia" partly because it ends happily, and partly because it is written in a simple style and in the vernacular Italian, not, as was then the almost universal custom for serious works, in Latin. The name "Divina" is meant to indicate its solemnity and sacredness.

Many are unable to apprehend the greatness of the "Divine Comedy." Voltaire called the "Inferno" revolting, the "Purgatorio" dull, and the "Paradiso" unreadable. The reason is because they are not rightly attuned for the acceptance of the great truths which the poem teaches, and because they look at it from a wholly mistaken standpoint. If anyone supposes that the "Inferno," for instance, is meant for a burning torture-chamber of endless torments and horrible vivisection, he entirely misses the central meaning of the poem as Dante himself explained it. For he said that it was not so much meant to foreshadow the state of souls after death—although on that subject he accepted, without attempting wholly to shake them off, the horrors which, in theory, formed part of mediæval Catholicism—but rather "man as rendering himself liable by the exercise of free-will to the rewards and punishments of justice." The hell of Dante is the hell of self; the hell of a soul which has not God in all its thoughts; the hell of final impenitence, of sin cursed by the exclusive possession of sin. It is a hell which exists no less in this world than in the next; just as his purgatory reflects the mingled joy and anguish of true repentance, and his heaven is the eternal peace of God, which men can possess here and now, and which the world can neither give nor take away. In other words, hell is not an obscure and material slaughter-house, but the Gehenna of evil deliberately chosen; and heaven is not a pagoda of jewels, but the presence and the light of God. Hence the "Divine Comedy" belongs to all time and to all place. While it supremely sums up the particular form assumed by the religion of the Middle Ages, it contains the eternal elements of all true religion in the life history of a soul, redeemed from sin and error, from lust and wrath and greed, and restored to the right path by the reason and the grace which enable it to see the things that are, and to see them as they are. The "Inferno," as has been said elsewhere, is the history of a soul descending through lower and lower stages of self-will till it sinks at last into those icy depths of Cocytus, wherein the soul is utterly emptied of God, and utterly filled with the loathly emptiness of self; the "Purgatory" is the history of the soul as it is gradually purged from sin and self, by effort and penitence and hope; the "Paradise" is the soul entirely filled with the fulness of God.

The moral truths in which the great poem abounds are numberless and of infinite interest. On these I cannot dwell, for to him who penetrates to the inner meaning of the allegory they are found on every page. But I may point out one or two supreme lessons which run throughout the teaching.

One is the lesson that like makes like—the lesson of modification by environment. We know how in Norfolk Island the convicts often degenerated almost into fiends because they associated with natures which had made themselves fiendlike, and were cut off from gentle, wholesome, and inspiring influences.

So it is in Dante's "Inferno." His evil men and seducers wax ever worse and worse because they have none around them save souls lost like their own. There is no brightening touch in the "Inferno." The name of Christ is never mentioned in its polluted air. The only angel who appears in it is not one of the radiant Sympathies, with fair golden heads and dazzling faces and wings and robes of tender green, of the "Purgatory," not one of the living topazes or golden splendors of the "Paradise"; but is stern, disdainful, silent, waving from before his face all contact with the filthy gloom. His Lucifer is no flickering, gentlemanly, philosophic man of the world like Goethe's Mephistopheles, nor like Milton's Fallen Cherub, whose

> "Form had not yet lost
> All her original brightness, nor appeared
> Less than archangel ruined, or excess
> Of glory obscured;"

but is a three-headed monster of loathly ugliness, with faces yellow with envy, crimson with rage, and black with ignorance; not haughty, splendid, defiant, but foul and loathly as sin itself.

PETRARCH

By Alice King

(1304–1374)

It was in the days of civil strife in Florence. The Republic, like the fickle mistress that she was, was stripping and turning out of doors her best servants, and was petting and clothing with honor her worst ones. Among those who, driven by the decree of banishment, hurried out of the city's southern gate were the parents of Francesco Petrarch. They retired to the little town of Arezzo, and there he was born in 1304, soon after their banishment. As she looked at her boy, his mother, Eletta, very likely mourned to think that he would not be able in after life to boast of being a native of fair Florence. She did not know that in future ages Florence was to count it among her highest distinctions that this child was of Florentine race.

Francesco was hardly freed from his swaddling-clothes when his father, with that restlessness peculiar to exiles, removed the whole family from Arezzo to Pisa. There they stayed for about two years; and the little fellow's first tottering, baby footsteps were traced on the banks of the Arno. When he was three the decree of banishment was, through the influence of friends in Florence, revoked toward the Petrarch family, as far as Eletta and her son were concerned-and a part of their property was restored to them. The father was glad to secure to his dear ones a safer and more comfortable home than he could find for them in his wanderings; and Eletta, though she wept at parting from her husband, smiled again when relations and old familiar companions crowded round her to admire her gallant boy.

She did not, however, stay long in the town. She withdrew to Ancisa, a village about fourteen miles from Florence, and settled there on a small estate belonging to her husband. This she did partly, perhaps, to keep down her expenses, and partly, perhaps, to devote herself more entirely to her son. Here his mother, who must have been a clever woman in her way, breathed into the boy Petrarch that high religious feeling which strengthened his whole life, and led him up the first steps of the ladder of knowledge; and here he acquired that taste for the sights and sounds of the country, and that love of its quiet which clung to him till the end of his days. The song of the nightingale, the whisper of the wind, the murmur of the stream, all re-echo constantly through his verse;

and even when he is most rapturous about Laura's beauty, he will often pause to tell of the grass and flowers on which she treads.

No doubt, also, it was through the healthy out-door life which he led as a child at Ancisa that he gained the physical strength which afterward enabled him to become one of the best horsemen and swordsmen of that day of bold riding and hard fighting. Eletta at that time worked well and wisely for both the body and mind of the future poet.

But the mother and son were not to stay always in that quiet retreat. After some time the elder Petrarch, finding that he could not get permission to return to Florence, sent for his wife and boy, and they went all together to Avignon, where they settled.

Proud of his son's talents, the elder Petrarch chalked out for him a grand career as an advocate, which was to end in the judge's ermine. He therefore sent Francesco to study law, first at Montpellier, and then at Bologna.

When Petrarch was twenty-two both his parents died. Soon after that he joyfully threw away his law-books, and resolved to live for literature, and literature alone. He went back to Avignon. But the ways of the town were not much to his taste, and its whirl and noise distracted his mind. He therefore spent part of the fortune inherited from his father in buying a small estate at Val Chiusa, a pretty, quiet nook some miles from Avignon. Thither he retired, and spent his time with his pen and his books, only now and then seeing a few friends who came out from the town to visit him.

The young man was not, however, always satisfied with this monotonous way of life. About this period he took a long journey, in which he saw many of the European capitals, and formed, among the learned of foreign lands, friendships which he afterward kept up through constant correspondence. The world already began to speak of Petrarch as a rising man of letters.

One Good Friday he was in the Church of Santa Chiara, at Avignon. There he saw a face which made him forget his prayers; a face from which the dark eyes of the South looked forth, though the bright hair of the North waved around it; a face which somehow exactly fitted into the niche of his ideal; a face which was to stamp itself upon his verse for all ages and for all lands. Petrarch had fixed his first look on Laura.

Afterward he got to know her personally, and they often met in society. Of Laura herself nothing certain is known, except that her maiden name was Noves and she lived in Avignon. Some writers say that she always remained single, in her father's house, and some that she married and had many children. There are a few pictures of her, for the authenticity of which it is impossible to answer. They are all handsome, and remarkable for an almost nun-like shyness and sweetness of expression. She was certainly a woman of refined taste and cultivated mind, and at a time when female modesty was the only rare adornment of the fair sex in Avignon, her character was as stainless as the first snow-flake which fell on the summit of the Estrelles. The connection between Petrarch and Laura seems to our modern ideas a very singular one.

To explain the position in which they stood to each other, we must turn to the manners and customs of their age and country. Partly, perhaps, through the great reverence paid in the Roman Catholic Church to the Virgin Mary and other female saints, a sort of woman worship had, in the thirteenth century, spread through the south of Christendom. It was no unusual thing for a knight or a troubadour to select a certain lady, celebrate her in his songs, call on her name in the hour of danger, and wear her color in battle. The adored or the adorer might be either of them married—that made no difference; and the tender litany would sometimes run on for years, long after the idol's hair was silvered and her form more remarkable for plumpness than grace.

Homage of this sort did not at all hurt the reputation of her to whom it was paid; not even her husband and children respected her the less for it. Some distinguished ladies had many devotees of this kind. On her side, the woman professed herself to have for her worshipper an equable, cordial feeling, which never went beyond sisterly friendship. Whether these platonic attachments ever slid into something warmer we cannot say. The history of the time gives us no examples of such being the case.

As for Petrarch, Laura's beauty and the graces of her mind first awoke within him a romantic sentiment, which, according to the fashion of his brethren the troubadours, he at once began publicly to proclaim in his verse.

By degrees, through his thoughts constantly dwelling on her, his glorious genius created out of Laura Noves an ideal being who was woven into his deepest feelings, and his most aërial fancies, and his highest aspirations. What mattered it to him that the real Laura as years went on grew middle-aged and changed? His own Laura was gifted with immortal youth. Even after her death his imagination was still filled with her; and the sweet cadences in which he mourns her, and the more exalted strains in which he follows her to her home above, will always be regarded by his readers as some of the most precious gems he has left them.

But Laura was not the poet's only theme. Love of his country was probably Petrarch's strongest passion. Italy was then a complete patchwork of small states, and it was the dream of Petrarch's whole life to see the Peninsula united from the Alps to Spartivento. In words burning as the summer suns which shine upon his native land, and powerful as the sudden storms which sometimes sweep over her shores, he spoke out this great longing of his life. He was also the author of many Latin poems, which were held in even higher honor than his writings in Italian. One of these Latin poems—that on Scipio Africanus—was a great favorite among his contemporaries, but to us it is the coldest and stiffest of his works.

Petrarch's fame went on steadily increasing, until at thirty-seven he was universally acknowledged as the first poet of the period. When he had reached that age, there came to his quiet little home at Val Chiusa two messengers from two great European cities—namely, Rome and Paris—each of which begged him to accept the laureate's crown within its walls. The true Italian could not long doubt which offer he should choose. The Paris invitation was courteously but immediately refused, and proudly and gratefully Petrarch hastened to Rome.

The act of receiving the crown of a poet laureate was, in those days of magnificent ceremonials, attended with much really regal pomp. Dressed in a robe of purple velvet glittering with jewels, such as suited the taste for splendor of the time, and such as in truth well befitted a literary prince, Petrarch was conducted with much public state through Rome to the Capitol, where he was thrice crowned: once with laurel, once with ivy, and once with myrtle. The laurel meant glory; the ivy signified the lasting fame which should attend his work; the myrtle was the lawful right of Laura's poet.

The Italian princes vied with each other in trying to get Petrarch to their courts, and in heaping favors upon him. He visited nearly all of them in turn. The life of a palace was perhaps not much more to Petrarch's taste than the life of a great city. But he was too much a man of the world not to be gratified by these honors, and besides, through the intimacy which he thus gained with the chief men of his country, he was able to work better toward his darling object, the unity of Italy. Many remarkable persons are briefly mixed up with the story of the poet in these days of his wanderings from city to city. We catch a glimpse of him being introduced by the pope to the German emperor Charles IV. at Avignon. We also see him grasping for a moment the hand of a man who, although no royal blood runs in his veins, looks in truth like a king among his fellows—Rienzi, the tribune.

The middle of Petrarch's life was darkened by the loss of many friends. Laura died, struck down by the plague which raged in Avignon, and Petrarch, who, without counting all the ideal romance with which he had surrounded her, had for her a strong, warm friendship, mourned her very deeply. Several other friends of his youth at this time also passed away from the earth. The heart of the poet was cruelly wounded by these losses, but he sought comfort in work and study, and devoted himself more entirely to the interests of his country.

As years went on the poet's love of a country life revived. He had done his utmost for Italy, but the result of that utmost had been nothing. The rest of his days should be given alone to literature. He therefore gave up frequenting courts, and bought a little estate at Arqua, a village among the Lombard hills, whither he retired. We like to fancy him in this pleasant home of his age, with his tall, lithe figure still unbent, his face, though careworn, still shining with intellectual light, his hand busy with the pen. Petrarch always loved the little elegancies of life, and no doubt, even in this country retreat, we should have seen him (unlike most of the literary brotherhood, whose very livery is untidiness) neatly dressed, and surrounded by as many pretty knick-knacks as the fourteenth century could afford. We should not ever have found his table very splendidly spread. Eletta's son kept the simple tastes acquired at Ancisa at her side, and liked best a diet of fruit and vegetables.

Once the call of friendship drew him out of his solitude; Carrara, the Prince of Padua, who had been for many years the poet's friend and patron, had got

into a mess with the Venetian Republic. and sent for Petrarch to get him out of it. This the poet's skill and eloquence very soon did, and then he went back to Arqua.

Florence the Fair had a peculiar way of her own of doing tardy justice to her children. She wept over Dante's grave, and after many years she begged Petrarch to come and live in the home of his fathers, within her walls. But the poet did not go. He had grown to think all Italy his country, rather than one city. Besides, a brighter home was beginning to open on the old man's view. Eletta and Laura and many other dear ones waited for him there, and when he had been seventy years upon earth God called him to join them.

GEOFFREY CHAUCER

By Alice King

(1328–1400)

It is very difficult to get even a correct outline of the figure of Geoffrey Chaucer. We think we have a perfect view of him; we congratulate ourselves upon knowing the man just as he moved and spoke among his contemporaries; when suddenly we discover that we are looking at a puppet cunningly dressed up by some imaginative biographer. We believe that we have got him into a good historical light, when all at once a doubt whether he was or was not an actor in such and such events throws him again into shadow. We try to conjure him up, but he comes in so many forms that we grow utterly bewildered. Yet, notwithstanding all this, we reverence him so deeply and love him so dearly, that we cannot help striving to gain some idea of what he was like.

The dates given of Chaucer's birth are very varied, and range from 1328 to 1348. Probably some year midway between these two may be the right one. The accounts of his parentage are just as uncertain. Some give him a vintner for a father, some a merchant, and some a knight. In our opinion the former of these is the most likely origin for Geoffrey Chaucer. His rich but broad humor seems as if it must have sprung from the merry, vigorous heart of the common people, and the variety of characters depicted in the "Canterbury Tales" proves that he must have mixed with all sorts of men and women, both high and low. In after-life he was familiar with courts, and knights, and ladies; but we fancy that in his youth he must have known intimately the cook, the wife of Bath, and the yeoman.

Whoever Chaucer's father may have been, he certainly gave him a very liberal education. His writings show that Chaucer was a good scholar, both in the classics and in divinity, and that, according to the ideas of the fourteenth century, he was far advanced in astronomy and the other sciences. Tradition says that he studied at both Cambridge and Oxford. This is not at all unlikely, for we find that reading young men of that day did sometimes really go from one university to the other. When he had finished his education in England, Chaucer went to Paris. There he may have gained that grace of carriage and manner for which he is said to have been always so remarkable.

We can picture to ourselves the handsome, free-spirited young fellow, with his ruddy Saxon face and ready Saxon wit, in the joyous capital of fair France; now whispering pretty nothings into the dainty ear of some dark-eyed grisette, now going home through the streets at daybreak, with a band of merry companions, shouting out in questionable French a jolly chorus; and now riding gayly forth to see how in a foreign land they understood the art of woodcraft. No doubt he sowed at this period a tolerable crop of wild oats, but at the same time he began to plant his laurels. He wrote very early his first long poem, "The Court of Love." This, like most of his earlier writings, is full of allegory and imagery. Though very gorgeous in coloring, and often literally overflowing with rich fancy, these first poems are rather wanting in the human interest of the "Canterbury Tales."

On his return to England Chaucer for a little while studied law. To judge by the only incident related of his legal life, he by no means entirely buried himself among musty old documents and ponderous volumes.

One afternoon, as young Chaucer was passing through the Temple with his temper made a little more irritable than usual, it may be by the heat of the sun, it may be by an additional cup of sack, it may be by the thought of an especially stiff piece of reading which was before him—it may be all three together—he met a friar. The priest came along with easy step and shining, rosy face, rejoicing at once in the odor of sanctity and of a good dinner. The sight of this placidly lazy and provokingly comfortable churchman had upon the man of law the same effect that the sight of a sleek tabby has upon a terrier. In two minutes Master Geoffrey has jostled against the friar and contrived to pick a quarrel with him Hereupon followed a lively game at single-stick, in which, no doubt, Chaucer's fellow-students backed loudly the law against the church. At first the friar showed himself no mean hand with the quarter-staff. But by degrees he began to give way before his more active antagonist, and when the fray was over the churchman had learned in good earnest what was meant by the strong arm of the law; young Chaucer was, however, afterward punished for his misdeed, by being brought before a magistrate, reprimanded, and fined as a breaker of the peace; all of which could not exactly have added to the respectability of the legal brotherhood. Soon after this Chaucer gave up the law, which was, in truth, entirely unsuited to him.

By some means, perhaps through the good offices of a friend, he now contrived to get introduced at Court, where his winning face and tongue quickly brought him into favor with the royal family. John of Gaunt, King Edward's third son, who was then not the "time-honored Lancaster" of after-days, but a gay young prince, took a special fancy to Chaucer. Prince and subject were, without doubt, well agreed in the way they liked to amuse themselves, and probably they carried on many a wild frolic together. This early intimacy ripened into a solid friendship, which lasted throughout their lives.

After a while John of Gaunt determined to become a steady married man. A rich bride was found for him in Blanche, the heiress of Lancaster. She was a gentle lady, who yielded up readily to her princely husband the revenues and the other privileges which were hers as a countess in her own right; and who, after a few years of quiet married life, spent chiefly at her northern castle, passed away softly from the earth, without dreaming that her son was to be the future king of England, and that her family title was in after-days to become the watchword on many a bloody field of civil strife.

In honor of Prince John's marriage, Chaucer wrote "The Parliament of Fowls," and in memory of Blanche's death "The Book of the Duchess." Chaucer seems to have had a true reverence and affection for the sweet household virtues and the wifely truth of this lady. The remembrance of her may perhaps have first suggested to him the image of Griselda. These two poems, connected as they were with the royal family, confirmed Chaucer's reputation as a writer of verse; and men and women began to point him out to each other and talk about him. In those days, however, it was quite impossible for any man to make literature his profession, and all his life, therefore, he could only take poetry as the business of his leisure hours. Then, no doubt, he really worked at it more than at the employment by which he lived; and no doubt, also, as he went about through the world, he was always learning something for his art. If this had not been the case, the name of Chaucer would not be what it now is in English literature.

At about this period Edward the Third set off for one of his many warlike expeditions into France. Young Chaucer, who was ready for everything, and who perhaps thought he should like to see a little of a soldier's life, entered the army and followed the king.

But the young soldier's experiences were not to be all of nights spent beneath clear starlit skies, and cheery communing with his comrades, and the eager glow of battle. Through an unlucky chance of war Chaucer was taken prisoner.

His prepossessing manners, and his knowledge of the French language and customs, gained during his stay in Paris probably, made his captivity a very easy one. But he had to sit still with folded hands while his countrymen were fighting, and in this season of forced inactivity he had time to repent past follies and to make good resolves for the future. At length, through an exchange of prisoners, the poet was set free. After that he never tried a soldier's life again, having most likely had quite enough of it.

Soon after his return to England, he got an appointment about the Court which brought him a settled income. He now began to think of making himself a home. Among those who followed in the train of Edward's queen, Philippa, when she came to England, were a certain knight of Hainault, called Roet, and his two little daughters. These children were now grown up into very comely young women. One, Catherine, had married an English gentleman, named Swynford. The other, Philippa, was maid of honor to the queen. According to Fanny Burney, a maid of honor has quite enough to do in the labors of dressing her mistress and herself; yet this industrious damsel, Philippa Roet, found spare time sufficient (between the business of clasping on jewels and arranging gracefully royal mantles, and contriving how to make an old dress look like new) to fall in love with Geoffrey Chaucer, and, what was more, to make the poet desperately in love with herself.

There being no impediment in the way, and the king and queen forwarding the matter, Chaucer and his Philippa were soon made man and wife. Not long after their marriage they had the misfortune to lose their generous mistress, the queen. Edward the Third, however, still treated Chaucer with favor. He made him one of the valets of his bed-chamber, and also gave him a high office in the customs. The two halves of his life must now have been strangely different. One was spent among velvet doublets, and waving plumes, and gilded armor, and all the many splendid vanities of a court; the other among heavy ledgers, and hard-handed sea captains, and casks of coarse spirit, and the most vulgar realities of a commonplace life. No wonder that a man whose time was passed among such contrasts should write by turns of a noble knight and a miller.

Several times King Edward sent Chaucer abroad on political missions. This is a great proof of the high esteem in which his master held him. In one of these journeys he went into Italy and saw the Mediterranean wash the marble quays of Genoa, and the stately towers of fair Florence raise themselves toward the blue sky. On this occasion, some of his biographers think, he visited Petrarch. This notion is, however, only founded on a passage in the "Canterbury Tales;" it is therefore our opinion that Chaucer, anxious as he must have been to despatch quickly the king's business, would hardly have spared time to go to Arqua, where Petrarch then lived, and that those who draw from the passage in question the inference that the two great poets must have met, are, as blundering critics often do, confounding the author with his characters. One of Chaucer's personages says that he heard a story he is about to tell from Petrarch; but that is no reason for concluding that Chaucer so heard it himself.

Rich must have been the dramatic anecdote and lively description which Chaucer brought home from these journeys. In those days of little travelling, an account of foreign countries must have had freshness and interest, even when it came from a commonplace man. What, then, must it have been on the lips of Chaucer?

In one of his absences, Chaucer's brother-poet, Gower, filled for him his post at Court. This is a delightful proof of the friendship which must have existed between the two. Many a ramble must they have taken together through the green fields in summer time, and many a flask of canary must have passed be-

CORBOULD PINXIT.

CHAUCER AND THE CANTERBURY PILGRIMS.

tween them on winter evenings. Could the diary of Philippa Chaucer have been published after her death, as most certainly it would have been in this century, it would doubtless have contained conversations as interesting as those in the pages of Boswell.

Chaucer constantly received proofs of King Edward's favor. At one time a pitcher of wine was sent daily to the poet by his sovereign, and when this was discontinued, he was given an equivalent in money. Late in life a close connection was formed between the families of Chaucer and of his old friend, John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster. Philippa Chaucer's sister, Catherine Swynford, who became early a widow, entered the Duke of Lancaster's household as a governess to the children of his first duchess.

The poet's own domestic life seems to have been very happy. Philippa appears to have been to him a bold and faithful helpmate in his journey through this world; and we believe that, could we trace closely her household influence, we should find that she first began to work the golden thread of religion into his life; for, notwithstanding that great coarseness which unluckily makes the "Canterbury Tales" unavailable as a book for family reading, but which we must chiefly impute to the customs of the age, Chaucer was, in the main, a religious man, and his poems are, in the main, religious poems. Chaucer was certainly a good father, and attended as far as he could to the education of his boys. His "Astrolabe," a work on astronomy, was written for his little Lewis, who was probably his father's pet.

On Richard II. coming to the throne, Chaucer got somewhat into trouble, through his leaning toward the side of the people in the civil broils which disturbed the early part of that king's reign. Some of the poet's biographers say he was so violent in his partisanship that he was obliged to fly from the wrath of government to Holland; but this is most decidedly a myth. Chaucer's nature was not of that stuff of which martyrs are made. He certainly, it is true, inclined to the popular cause. His friend and patron, the Duke of Lancaster, was the chief leader of the liberal party. No doubt the poet disliked tyranny in any form, and no doubt he wished to see the Church of Rome purged from her worst abuses. Very likely, also, he may have sometimes gone privately to hear Wickliffe preach, and his heart may have been drawn toward the new doctrines. But most assuredly he showed his feelings and opinions in a very mild, cautious way, and the only sign of the king's displeasure was a temporary stoppage of the pension which Chaucer had for some years received.

This must have made Chaucer and his Philippa, in the decline of life, know what straitened means were like; but doubtless cheery wit and merry smiles made home music and home light around the scantily spread table. Afterward, however, the pension was restored.

Of the "Canterbury Tales," that vast storehouse of humor, of pathos, of fancy, and of strong, manly common sense, we have no place to speak here. They were the work of his ripened powers in middle age, and probably the old man was still busy with them when he heard the whisper which called him to his rest.

TORQUATO TASSO

(1544–1595)

Torquato Tasso, born at Sorrento, March 11, 1544, was the son of Bernardo Tasso by Portia de Rossi, a lady of a noble Neapolitan family. His father was a man of some note, both as a political and as a literary character; and his poem "Amadigi," founded on the well-known romance of Amadis de Gaul, has been preferred by one partial critic even to the "Orlando Furioso." Ferrante Sanseverino, Prince of Salerno, chose him for his secretary, and with him and for him Bernardo shared all the vicissitudes of fortune. That prince having been deprived of his estates, and expelled from the kingdom of Naples by the Court of Spain, Bernardo was involved in his proscription, and retired with him to Rome. Torquato, then five years old, remained with his mother, who went to reside with her family in Naples.

Bernardo Tasso having lost all hopes of ever returning to that capital, advised his wife to retire with his daughter into a nunnery, and to send Torquato to Rome. Our young poet suffered much in parting from his mother and sister; but, fulfilling the command of his parents, he joined his father in October, 1554. On this occasion he composed a canzone, in which he compared himself to Ascanius escaping from Troy with his father Æneas.

The fluctuating fortunes of the elder Tasso caused Torquato to visit successively Bergamo, the abode of his paternal relatives, and Pesaro, where his manners and intelligence made so favorable an impression, that the Duke of Pesaro chose him for companion to his son, then studying under the celebrated Corrado, of Mantua. In 1559, he accompanied his father to Venice, and there perused the best Italian authors, especially Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio. The next year he went to the University of Padua, where, under Sperone Speroni and Sigonio, he studied Aristotle and the critics; and by Piccolomini and Pandasio he was taught the moral and philosophical doctrines of Socrates and Plato. However, notwithstanding his severer studies, Torquato never lost sight of his favorite art; and at the age of seventeen, in ten months, he composed his "Rinaldo," a poem in twelve cantos, founded on the then popular romances of Charlemagne and his paladins. This work, which was published in 1562, excited great admiration, and gave rise to expectations which were justified by the "Jerusalem Delivered." The plan of that immortal poem was conceived, according to Serassi's conjecture in 1563, at Bologna, where Tasso was then prosecuting his studies. The first sketch of it is still preserved in a manuscript, dated 1563, in the Vatican Library, and printed at Venice in 1722. Unfortunately, while thus engaged, he was brought into collision with the civil authorities, in consequence of some satirical attacks on the University, which were falsely attributed to him. The charge was refuted, but not until his papers had been seized and himself imprisoned. This disgusted him with Bologna, and he returned to Padua in 1564. There he applied all his faculties to the accomplishment of his epic poem; collected immense materials from the chronicles of the Crusades; and wrote, to exercise his critical powers, the "Discorsi" and the "Trattato sulla Poesia." While thus engaged, the Cardinal Luigi d'Este appointed him a gentleman of his court. Speroni endeavored to dissuade the young poet from accepting that office, by relating the many disappointments which he had himself experienced while engaged in a similar career. These remonstrances were vain; Tasso joined the cardinal at Ferrara at the end of October, 1564, and soon attracted the favorable notice of the Duke Alfonso, brother of the cardinal, and of their sisters; one of whom, the celebrated Eleanora, is commonly supposed to have exercised a lasting and unhappy influence over the poet's life. Ferrara continued to be his chief place of abode till 1571, when he was summoned to accompany his patron the cardinal to France. The gayeties of Ferrara, celebrated in that age for its splendor, did not prevent his prosecuting his poetic studies with zeal; for it appears from his will, quoted by Mr. Stebbing, that, at his departure for France he had written a considerable portion of the "Jerusalem," besides a variety of minor pieces. His reputation was already high at the court of France, where he was received by Charles IX. with distinguished attention. But he perceived, or fancied that he saw, a change in the cardinal's demeanor toward him, and, impatient of neglect, begged leave to return to Italy. In 1572 he was at Rome with the Cardinal Ippolito d'Este. In the same year he entered the service of the Duke of Ferrara, and resumed with zeal the completion and correction of the "Jerusalem."

In 1573, Tasso wrote his beautiful pastoral drama "Aminta." This new production added greatly to his reputation. He chose simple Nature for his model; and succeeded admirably in the imitation of her. The "Jerusalem Delivered" was completed in 1575. Tasso submitted it to the criticism of the most learned men of that age. The great confusion which prevailed in the remarks of his critics caused him extraordinary uneasiness. To answer their objections, he wrote the "Lettere Poetiche," the best key to the true interpretation of his poem.

During 1575, Tasso visited Pavia, Padua, Bologna, and Rome, and in 1576 returned to Ferrara. His abode there never was a happy one; for his talents, celebrity, and the favor in which he was held, raised up enemies, who showed their spleen in petty underminings and annoyances, to which the poet's susceptible temper lent a sting. He was attracted, however, by the kindness of the duke and the society of the beautiful and accomplished Eleanora, the duke's sister, for whom the poet ventured, it is said, to declare an affection which, according to some historians, did not remain unrequited. The portrait of Olinda, in the beautiful episode which relates her history, is generally understood to have been designed after this living model; while some have imagined that Tasso himself is not less clearly pictured in the description of her lover, Sofronio. There was also another Eleanor, a lady of the court with whom the poet for a while imagined himself in love. But about this time, whether from mental uneasiness, or from constitutional causes, his conduct began to be marked by a morbid irritability allied to madness. The "Jerusalem" was surreptitiously printed without having received the author's last corrections; and he entreated the duke, and all his powerful friends, to prevent such an abuse. Alfonso and the pope himself endeavored to satisfy Tasso's demands, but with little success. This circumstance, and other partly real, partly imaginary troubles, augmented so much his natural melancholy and apprehension, that he began to think that his enemies not only persecuted and calumniated him, but accused him of great crimes; he even imagined that they had the intention of denouncing his works to the Holy Inquisition. Under this impression he presented himself to the inquisitor of Bologna; and having made a general confession, submitted his works to the examination of that holy father, and begged and obtained his absolution. His malady, for such we may surely call it, was continually exasperated by the arts of his rivals; and on one occasion, in the apartments of the Duchess of Urbino, he drew his sword on one of her attendants. He was immediately arrested, and subsequently sent to one of the Duke's villas, where he was kindly treated and supplied with medical advice. But his fancied injuries (for in this case they do not seem to have been real) still pursued him; and he fled, destitute of everything, from Ferrara, and hastened to his sister Cornelia, then living at Sorrento. Her care and tenderness very much soothed his mind and improved his health; but, unfortunately, he soon repented of his hasty flight, and returned to Ferrara, where his former malady soon regained its power. Dissatisfied with all about him, he again left that town; but, after having wandered for more than a year, he returned to Alfonso, by whom he was received with indifference and contempt. By nature sensitive, and much excited by his misfortunes, Tasso began to pour forth bitter invectives against the duke and his court. Alfonso exercised a cruel revenge; for, instead of soothing the unhappy poet, he shut him up as a lunatic in the hospital of St. Anne. Yet, strange to say, notwithstanding his sufferings, mental and bodily, for more than seven years in that abode of misery and despair, his powers remained unbroken, his genius unimpaired; and even there he composed some pieces, both in prose and verse, which were triumphantly appealed to by his friends in proof of his sanity. To this period we may probably refer the "Veglie," or "Watches" of Tasso, the manuscript of which was discovered in the Ambrosian Library, at Milan, toward the end of the last century. They are written in prose, and express the author's melancholy thoughts in elegant and poetic language. The "Jerusalem" had now been published and republished both in Italy and France, and

BARTH PINXIT.

TASSO AND THE TWO ELEANORS.

Europe rang with its praises; yet the author lay almost perishing in close confinement, sick, forlorn, and destitute of every comfort.

In 1548, Camillo Pellegrini, a Capuan nobleman, and a great admirer of Tasso's genius, published a "Dialogue on Epic Poetry," in which he placed the "Jerusalem" far above the "Orlando Furioso." This testimony from a man of literary distinction caused a great sensation among the friends and admirers of Ariosto. Two academicians of the Crusca, Salviati and De Rossi, attacked the "Jerusalem" in the name of the academy, and assailed Tasso and his father in a gross strain of abuse. From the mad-house Tasso answered with great moderation; defended his father, his poem, and himself from these groundless invectives; and thus gave to the world the best proof of his soundness of mind, and of his manly, philosophical spirit.

At length, after being long importuned by the noblest minds of Italy, Alfonso released him in 1586, at the earnest entreaty of Don Vincenzo Gonzaga, son of the Duke of Mantua, at whose court the poet for a time took up his abode. There, through the kindness and attentions of his patron and friends, he improved so much in health and spirits that he resumed his literary labors, and completed his father's poem, "Floridante," and his own tragedy, "Torrismondo."

But, with advancing age, Tasso became still more restless and impatient of dependence, and he conceived a desire to visit Naples, in the hope of obtaining some part of the confiscated property of his parents. Accordingly, having received permission from the duke, he left Mantua, and arrived in Naples at the end of March, 1588. About this time he made several alterations in his "Jerusalem," corrected numerous faults, and took away all the praises he had bestowed on the House of Este. Alfieri used to say that this amended "Jerusalem" was the only one which he could read with pleasure to himself or with admiration for the author. But as there appeared no hope that his claims would be soon adjusted, he returned to Rome in November, 1588. Ever harassed by a restless mind, he quitted, one after another, the hospitable roofs which gave him shelter; and at last, destitute of all resources and afflicted with illness, took refuge in the hospital of the Bergamaschi, with whose founder he claimed relation by the father's side; a singular fate for one with whose praises Italy even then was ringing. But it should be remembered, ere we break into invectives against the sordidness of the age which suffered this degradation, that the waywardness of Tasso's temper rendered it hard to satisfy him as an inmate, or to befriend him as a patron.

Restored to health, at the grand duke's invitation he went to Florence, where both prince and people received him with every mark of admiration. Those who saw him as he passed along the streets, would exclaim, "See! there is Tasso! That is the wonderful and unfortunate poet!"

It is useless minutely to trace his wanderings from Florence to Rome, from Rome to Mantua, and back again to Rome and Naples. At the latter place he dwelt in the palace of the Prince of Conca, where he composed a great part of the "Jerusalem Conquered." But having apprehended, not without reason, that the prince wished to possess himself of his manuscripts, Torquato left the palace to reside with his friend Manso. His health and spirits improved in his new abode; and besides proceeding with the "Jerusalem Conquered," he commenced, at the request of Manso's mother, "Le Sette Giornate del Mondo Creato," a sacred poem in blank verse, founded on the Book of Genesis, which he completed in Rome a few days before his death.

He visited Rome in 1593. A report that Marco di Sciarra, a notorious bandit, infested the road, induced him to halt at Gaeta, where his presence was celebrated by the citizens with great rejoicing. Sciarra having heard that the great poet was detained by fear of him, sent a message purporting that, instead of injury, Tasso should receive every protection at his hands. This offer was declined; yet Sciarra, in testimony of respect, sent word that for the poet's sake he would withdraw all his band from that neighborhood; and he did so.

This time, on his arrival at Rome, Tasso was received by the Cardinals Cinzio and Pietro Aldobrandini, nephews of the pope, not as a courtier, but as a friend. At their palace he completed the "Jerusalem Conquered," and published it with a dedication to Cardinal Cinzio. This work was preferred by its author to the "Jerusalem Delivered." It is remarkable that Milton made a similar error in estimating his "Paradise Regained."

In March, 1594, Tasso returned to Naples in hope of benefiting his rapidly declining health. The experiment appeared to answer; but scarcely had he passed four months in his native country, when Cardinal Cinzio requested him to hasten to Rome, having obtained for him from the pope the honor of a solemn coronation in the Capitol. In the following November the poet arrived at Rome, and was received with general applause. The pope himself overwhelmed him with praises, and one day said, "Torquato, I give you the laurel, that it may receive as much honor from you as it has conferred upon them who have worn it before you." To give to this solemnity greater splendor, it was delayed till April 25, 1595; but during the winter Tasso's health became worse. Feeling that his end was nigh, he begged to be removed to the convent of St. Onofrio, where he was carried off by fever on the very day appointed for his coronation. His corpse was interred the same evening in the church of the monastery, according to his will; and his tomb was covered with a plain stone, on which, ten years after, Manso, his friend and admirer, caused this simple epitaph to be engraved —Hic Jacet Torquatus Tasso.

CERVANTES

By Joseph Forster

(1547–1616)

Cervantes, the Shakespeare of Spain, led a life of the most romantic and adventurous kind. In fact, no novelist has ever invented a story as fascinating and varied as the bare facts of his most extraordinary career. He was a soldier, a dramatist, a patriot, a slave; and after producing, perhaps, the greatest novel ever written, a work which is the glory of Spanish literature and a delight to the civilized world, he died poor and neglected.

His family was noble and was first settled in Galicia, from whence it moved to Castile. Cervantes was born in 1547. His family, although honorable, was very poor, but he received a liberal education. He became a page, chamberlain, and afterward a soldier, and fought at the naval battle of Lepanto, "Where," he said, "I lost my left hand by an arquebuse under the conquering banner of the son of that thunderbolt of war, Charles V., of happy memory."

He also distinguished himself at the siege of Tunis, and later was taken prisoner by a Barbary corsair, and was kept in cruel captivity for five years at Algiers. It was customary with the Algerines to treat their prisoners according to their supposed rank and expected ransom. The avarice of the masters sometimes alleviated the lot of the Christian slaves; but, unfortunately for Cervantes, he was treated with extreme severity in order to compel him to obtain ransom from his friends, while he, the very soul of independence, tried to escape in order to avoid trespassing on their resources. The interest of the Moors was to pretend to believe that their captives were of exalted rank and position, in order to obtain a bigger ransom.

Cervantes, in one of his novels, makes Ricardo give an account of this notable custom in the story of his adventures. His master, Fetale, is always complimenting him upon his exalted rank, and telling him that, from a sense of honor, he should pay a high ransom. He tells him that it is not becoming his rank to remain an idle and inglorious captive, and laughs at the repeated disclaimers of his prisoner. Unfortunately, when Cervantes was captured he had in his possession letters of introduction from public personages of the day, which caused him to be highly valued. This led to cruel sufferings, inflicted in the expectation of obtaining a heavy ransom. He was sentenced to be imprisoned in a place called the Baths. The Moorish dungeons had three depths of caverns, like underground granaries. In mockery of the light of heaven, there was one small window, and that was crossed with iron bars. The sun and air never entered this awful place. The only sights were harrowing; the only company was that of convicts, thieves, murderers, and the lowest Moorish rabble; and the sounds and voices, mixed with blasphemies and oaths, were re-echoed as if from the vaults of the dead. Every sense was outraged by the accumulation of horrors that combined to disgust and horrify. Hunger, nakedness, thirst, heat, damp, and cold, all combined to swell the catalogue of their miseries and their woes. We can easily picture the sufferings of Cervantes, whose captivity was as severe as it was possible even for his Algerian master to make it. No wonder that a man so full of energy as Cervantes should try again and again to escape from his infernal captivity. On four occasions he was on the point of being impaled, hanged, or burned alive for his daring attempts to liberate himself and his unfortunate comrades. But, of all the enterprises which entered the imagination of this fearless soldier, the most generous, noble, and remarkable, as regarded its consequences, made too at a period when Europe trembled at the clank of the Ottoman chains, was that of rising upon their tyrants and destroying them in the very stronghold of their cruelty and their power.

There is the best authority for believing that, if the good fortune of Cervantes had been equal to his courage, perseverance, and skill, the city of Algiers would have been taken by the Christians; for his bold and resolute project aimed at no less a result. Moreover, if he had not been sold and betrayed by those who undertook to assist him in his grand and noble undertaking—to liberate the captives of so many lands—his own captivity might have proved a fortunate event.

At last Cervantes returned to Spain, after five years' slavery at Algiers. He returned fired with animosity against the Moors, and filled with ardent sympathy for those Christians still in slavery. Thus his comedy of "El Trato de Argel, Los Baños de Argel," his tale of the Captive in "Don Quixote," and that of the Generous Lover, were not mere literary works, but charitable endeavors to serve the Christian captives, and to excite the public sympathy in their favor. I have dwelt fully on this extraordinary experience of Cervantes, an experience which brought him into direct contact with the lowest classes and the elementary passions of mankind, with a view of showing how profound and terrible was his knowledge of human character and human passion.

Before producing his immortal masterpiece, "Don Quixote," Cervantes wrote a great number of plays which were not successful. When Cervantes speaks of his own dramatic works in his old age, his simplicity and gayety are very touching, because he was evidently deeply wounded at the neglect of his plays.

"Some years ago," he says, "I returned to the ancient occupation of my leisure hours; and, imagining that the age had not passed away in which I used to hear the sound of praise, I began to write comedies. The birds, however, had flown from their nest. I could find no manager to ask for my plays, though they knew that I had written them. I threw them, therefore, into the corner of a trunk, and condemned them to obscurity. A bookseller then told me that he would have bought them from me, had he not been told by a celebrated author that much dependence might be placed upon my prose, but not upon my poetry. To say the truth, this information mortified me much. I said to myself, 'Cervantes, you are certainly either changed, or the world, contrary to its custom, has grown wiser, for in past times you used to meet with praise.' I read my comedies anew, together with some interludes which I had placed with them. I found that they were not so bad but that they might pass, from what this author called darkness, into what others might perhaps term noon-day. I was angry, and sold them to the bookseller, who has now printed them. They have paid me tolerably; and I have pocketed my money with pleasure, and without troubling myself about the opinions of the actors; I was willing to make them as excellent as I could, and if, dear reader, thou findest anything in them good, I pray thee, when thou meetest any other calumniator, to tell him to amend his manners, and not to judge so severely, since after all the plays contain not any incongruities or striking faults."

I must not dwell further on Cervantes's minor works, but will pass to his great masterpiece, "Don Quixote." This work contains the hoarded experience of a life. It was written when its author was declining in years. No young man could have written it, because no young man can be a master, especially of humor and human nature. Don Quixote himself is a character of the most complex kind. His single-heartedness, his enthusiasm, his utter want of the sense of the ridiculous, his power of adding romantic charms and romantic attributes to a frowsy servant-girl, are developed and used by the author with a variety of power that has never been equalled. Don Quixote's life is entirely in the imagination; this enables him to see castles in windmills, beauty and refinement in coarseness and vulgarity, and poetry, wisdom, and genius in bombastic and absurd works on chivalry, love, and knight-errantry. To emphasize the romantic and preposterous exaltation of the mad gentleman of La Mancha, we have his coarse, vulgar, practical, almost grovelling squire, Sancho Panza. The master lives in the clouds; Sancho is most at home in the mud. Everything that can be done to bring out the contrast between these two characters is put in the most amusing and effective manner. No extracts could convey to the reader the adventures of the master and man at the inn—a very vulgar inn, too—which Don Quixote takes for an enchanted castle, in spite of the smell of rancid oil and garlic, and where, as a climax to all the other piled-up absurdities, poor Sancho, who is short and fat, is tossed in a blanket. Don Quixote always expresses himself in a stilted and oratorical manner; Sancho's language is of the coarsest kind, and is interlarded with the vulgarest illustrations and proverbs. His master is tall, attenuated, in fact, merely skin and bone; his face is long, his nose prominent, his eyes hollow and very bright; Sancho, on the contrary, is short, fat, his face is round, eyes small and pig-like, mouth large and coarse, nose nothing to speak of; in fact, it is a contrast between the poetical gone mad and the coarsest realism.

This work was the delight of Spain; it was read with shouts of laughter by the king and the peasant. Poor Don Quixote is a type of the fatal results which follow the possession of romantic feelings and enthusiasm without common-sense to guide and control them. On the other hand, and that is the priceless lesson of the book, his man, Sancho Panza, shows what the mere worship of ease and vulgar prudence will degrade a man to. If the enthusiasm and mad exaltation of Don Quixote could have been combined with a little of the vulgar self-love of Sancho, one extreme might have corrected the other, and we might have had a wise gentleman instead of a maniac and a brute.

Such was the success of this wonderful work that, as Philip III. was one afternoon standing in a balcony of his palace at Madrid, he observed a student on the banks of the river Manzanares, with a book in his hand, which delighted him so that, every now and then, he broke into an ecstasy of laughter. The king looked at him, and, turning to his courtiers, said, "That man is either mad or reading 'Don Quixote.'"

Although the king thought so highly of this great work, its author was bowed down by poverty and infirmities, and nothing was done for him by the king or his courtiers. The last glimpse of the life of Cervantes I have space for, is from his own inimitable pen, and is taken from the preface to the "Labors of Persiles and Sigismunda," which was published by the author's widow.

'It happened afterward, dear reader, that as two of my friends and myself were coming from Esquivias, a place famous for twenty reasons, but more especially for illustrious families and for its excellent wines, I heard a man coming behind us, whipping his nag with all his might, and seemingly very desirous of overtaking us. Presently he called out to us to stop, which we did; and when he came up he turned out to be a country student, dressed in brown, with spatterdashes and round-toed shoes. He had a sword in a huge sheath, and a band tied with tape. He had indeed but two tapes, so that his band got out of its place, which he took great pains to rectify.

"'Doubtless,' said he, 'señors, you are in quest of some office or some prebend at the court of my lord of Toledo, or from the king, if I may judge from the celerity with which you get along; for, in good truth, my ass has hitherto had the fame of a good trotter, and yet he could not overtake you."

"One of my companions answered, 'It is the steed of Señor Miguel de Cervantes that is the cause of it, for he is very quick in his paces.'"

"Scarcely had the student heard the name of Cervantes than, throwing himself off his ass, while his cloak-bag tumbled on one side and his portmanteau on the other, and his bands covered his face, he sprang toward me, and, seizing me by the hand, exclaimed:

"'This, then, is the famous one-handed author, the merriest of all writers, the favorite of the Muses!' As for me, when I heard him pouring forth all these praises, I thought myself bound to answer him; so, embracing his neck, by which I contrived to pull off his bands altogether, I said, 'I am indeed that Cervantes, señor, but not the favorite of the Muses, nor the other fine things which you have said of me. Pray mount your ass again, and let us converse together for the small remainder of our journey.' The good student did as I desired. We then drew bit and proceeded at a more moderate pace. As we rode on, we talked of my illness, but the student gave me little hope, saying:

"'It is an hydropsy, which all the water in the ocean, if you could drink it, would not cure; you must drink less, Señor Cervantes, and not forget to eat, for that alone can cure you.'

"'Many other people,' said I, 'have told me the same thing, but it is impossible for me not to drink as if I had been born for nothing but drinking. My life is pretty nearly ended, and, to judge by the quickness of my pulse, I cannot live longer than next Sunday. You have made acquaintance with me at a very unfortunate time, as I fear I shall not live to show my gratitude to you for your obliging conduct.'

"Such was our conversation when we arrived at the bridge of Toledo, over which I was to pass, while he followed another route by the bridge of Segovia. As to his future history, I leave that to the care of fame. My friends, no doubt, will be very anxious to narrate it, and I shall have great pleasure in hearing it. I embraced him anew, and repeated the offer of my services.

"He spurred his ass, and left me as ill inclined to prosecute my journey as he was well disposed to go on his; he had, however, supplied my pen with ample materials for pleasantry. But all times are not the same. Perhaps the day may arrive when, taking up the thread which I am now compelled to break, I may complete what is now wanting, and what I would fain tell. But adieu to gayety; adieu to humor; adieu, my pleasant friends! I must now die, and I wish for nothing better than speedily to see you—well contented in another world."

Such was the calm, philosophical gayety with which this long-suffering, heroic man and Christian contemplated his approaching death; and, in the words of Sismondi, it may be safely asserted that this unaffected fortitude was characteristic of the soldier who fought so valiantly at Lepanto, and who so firmly supported his five years' captivity in Algiers.

Cervantes died at Madrid in 1616. It is, perhaps, interesting to reflect that he was a contemporary of Shakespeare, so that the two greatest humorists the world has produced were living at the same time.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE*

By Senator John J. Ingalls

(1564–1616)

In a small glazed cabinet near the north door of Holy Trinity Church in the Warwickshire village of Stratford-upon-Avon, the long narrow volume of the parish register lies open at the page on which is inscribed in clear, clerkly hand the record of the christening of William Shakespeare, April 26, 1564. Tradition, which delights in coincidences, has selected as his birthday the anniversary of his death, which occurred April 23, 1616, but the date is unknown. His lineage was humble and his origin obscure, his ancestors having been tenant farmers and small tradesmen in the same locality, without wealth, education, estate, or public station. No other of the name has reached special distinction before or since. His grandfather, Richard, was a yeoman at the neighboring hamlet of Snitterfield. His father, John, who appears, from the vague glimpses of his history discernible, to have been of an ardent, careless, and improvident nature, removed in early life from the farm at Snitterfield to Stratford, where he kept a country store. He prospered in business for a while and was active in local politics, rising through the successive gradations of leet juror, constable, and alderman to high bailiff in 1568, although unable to write his own name. He married, in 1557, Mary Arden, the daughter of his father's landlord, who brought him as dower about sixty acres of land and the equivalent of $200 in money. His pride was apparently inflamed by political success, and he applied to the Herald's College for a grant of arms, which was refused. From this time his fortunes rapidly declined. He mortgaged his property, squandered his wife's inheritance, was sued for debt, disregarded his social and religious obligations, and became so indifferent to decency that he was fined by the town authorities for neglecting to remove the filth and refuse of his household from the street in front of his own door. He died in 1601, his later years having been passed in honor and comfort through the efforts of his son, who had already acquired wealth and fame.

The homestead of John Shakespeare, in which he lived and carried on his business, still stands on Henley Street, in Stratford, much the same as it was four

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hundred and fifty years ago. It is a paltry hovel of two low stories, half timbered, with meagre windows, and must have been a squalid abode even in its prime. It is built flush with the sidewalk, having neither vestibule nor entry, and the rough broken pavement of the kitchen is sunken a step lower than the street. A huge open fireplace of unhewn gray stones yawns rudely in the wall to the right, and a narrow door leads to a smaller apartment in the rear. Immediately above, reached by a precipitous stairway, is the bleak and barren chamber, dimly lighted, the legendary birthplace of the poet. The dwelling is more like the cavern of a savage than the residence of civilized man. Making due allowance for the conditions of domestic life and architecture in the reigns of Elizabeth and James, it is difficult to imagine a home more rude and primitive, more destitute of comfort and convenience, more indicative of poverty and social inferiority. The rough-hewn oak of the frames and timbers and the coarse mortar of the plastered spaces show no more decoration or ornament than the frontier dug-out on the plains of Dakota or the miner's cabin in the gulches of Montana.

In this environment William Shakespeare, the third child and eldest son of eight children, was born and lived till the age of eighteen years. Of his companions, his studies, his pleasures nothing is known.

A few doors from his father's house still stands a group of gray buildings, worn, bleached, and washed like skeletons by the storms and suns of eight centuries: a chapel with pointed windows and low square tower, a hall and the almshouses of the ancient guild. In the second story of the hall was the endowed grammar school of Stratford, restored by Edward VI. in 1553, and the uncouth, venerable desk at which Shakespeare is said to have studied is included among the few unauthenticated relics in the museum at the homestead. It is a reasonable inference that whatever education he received was obtained here, but this fact, as well as the character and amount of his early training, is wholly conjectural. The first formal separate biography of Shakespeare was published in 1743, one hundred and twenty-seven years after his death, by Rowe, who says that the boy was withdrawn from school in 1578 to assist his father in the drudgery of the shop and farm. Other mouldy gossip makes him a butcher's apprentice, a country pedagogue, and a lawyer's clerk, arrested for poaching, addicted to carousing and the boorish pleasures of the country-side.

A little distance westward from Stratford by a footpath winding through pleasant fields lies the hamlet of Shottery, in the edge of which, with its gable to the highway, stands the cottage of Richard Hathaway, as humble in its architecture and accessories as the Shakespeare abode. The entrance is through a rustic garden with pinks and marigolds bordering the narrow way, and a covered well before the door. November 28, 1582, the Bishop of Worcester granted a license for the marriage of "William Shagspere and Anne Hathwey" upon once asking of the banns. The bridegroom was eighteen and the bride twenty-six. By this act William Shakespeare assumed the paternity of a daughter born six months afterward, and baptized Susanna, May 26, 1583. The only other children born of the marriage were twins, Hamnet and Judith, christened February 2, 1585. The two daughters survived their father, but Hamnet died at the age of twelve.

Thus two months before he became of age Shakespeare found himself a cadet of a ruined house, the parent of three children, with no business, trade, or fortune, and the compulsory husband of a woman old enough to have been the wife of his father. Where and how they lived has not been discovered. The mature age and premature maternity of Mrs. Shakespeare justify inferences which his mysterious departure for London does not weaken, and his long absence, his infrequent visits to Stratford, the Duke's injunction to Viola—"let still the woman take An Elder than herself"—and the ironical bequest of his second best bed, neither diminish nor destroy.

The seven years succeeding the birth of Hamnet and Judith are a blank in Shakespeare's biography. He disappeared even from the reach of rumor and tradition. One hundred and fifty years after his death Oldys, the antiquarian, exhumed an ancient legend, to the effect that he fled to London to avoid the consequences of lampooning a neighboring nobleman who had prosecuted him for killing a deer in his park, and sought employment at the theatre. Unsupported anecdotes represent him as holding horses at the door of the play-house, then as a servant to the company, and at last as general utility man on the stage. As an actor he made no impression, although he continued to appear in subordinate parts, and played in Ben Jonson's "Sejanus" at its production in 1603, when he was forty years old. The first public notice he received was in 1592, in a letter of Robert Greene, a dissolute writer, who accuses Shakespeare and Marlowe of plagiarism, conceit, and ingratitude. Chettle, the publisher, soon afterward printed a retraction so far as Shakespeare was concerned, and eulogized his manners, his honesty, and his art. Our acquaintance with his life of twenty years in London, which closed probably in 1613, is almost exclusively confined to the appearance of the plays and poems bearing his name, and the date at which these were produced is generally a matter of surmise or inference. During this interval he became a large shareholder in two theatres, speculated in real estate, loaned money, grew rapidly in wealth, and was a man about town. He belonged to no church, nor to any political party, and sustained no recorded relations with the scholars, soldiers, or statesmen of his time.

The two volumes of poems, "Venus and Adonis," and "Lucrece," were published respectively in 1593 and 1594, and the "Sonnets" in 1609. The dramas were acted between 1587 and 1612, and are grouped by critics in four periods of intellectual growth and development. They are of unequal excellence. Some are mere versions and adaptations. The plots and stories are generally borrowed. Some of the worst are unspeakably bad, but the best, with their subtle and imperious command of language, stately and splendid imagery, careless opulence of incident, learning, and illustration, wit, wisdom, humor, and philosophy, insight into the complex abysses of human passion, familiarity with the secret motives of human conduct, and profound meditation upon the most sombre problems of human destiny, mark the highest elevation yet reached by the human mind.

SCHRADER PINXIT.

SHAKESPEARE ARRESTED FOR DEER STEALING.

No edition of the plays was collected during Shakespeare's lifetime, nor until seven years after his death. His heirs and executors made no claim to supervision nor ownership. He took no apparent interest in them, nor corrected, nor revised them for publication. He left no indication by which the genuine could be discerned from the spurious, and was apparently indifferent to literary reputation. Unlike many of his great contemporaries in that luminous epoch, there was little of the Bohemian in Shakespeare. He attended strictly to business, and grew in prosperity as he increased in fame. Marlowe, Massinger, Ford, Decker, Middleton, Webster, and others of his associates led precarious and irregular lives as hack-writers for the stage, but Shakespeare, in his triple functions as actor, author, and shareholder of the Blackfriars and the Globe, rapidly acquired a fortune. As early as 1597, after ten years in London, at the age of thirty-four, he had amassed enough to enable him to buy New Place, the largest mansion in Stratford, built by Sir Hugh Clopton, and from time to time he added to his possessions by the purchase of reai estate and tithes, till he became the wealthiest citizen of his native town. He was also the owner of improved property in London, near St. Paul's Cathedral, bought three years before his death. No doubt the bitter recollections of the privations of his childhood. and the humiliations resulting from his father's heedless improvidence, stimulated his purpose to retrieve the misfortunes of his family, establish them in comfort and dignity amid the familiar scenes of his youth, and retire from the scene of his triumphs to the shadowy forests and sylvan vistas of the Avon, where his life began.

The "Great House" in New Place, where Shakespeare led the life of a country gentleman after breaking the magician's wand, like the other residences in Stratford, must have stood even with the street, for the brick arches of part of the foundation, and fragments of the side and cross walls remain, being covered with iron gratings to prevent depredation. The curb and canopy of the well from which he drank are draped with clustering vines. It was a modest domain of small area, and is now a grassy lawn surrounded by an iron paling. After the death of Shakespeare's granddaughter, Lady Bernard, in 1670, the house was sold to a descendant of its original owner, and finally became the property of Rev. Francis Gastrell, who, in 1756, cut down the mulberry-tree planted by Shakespeare, because he was annoyed by the curiosity of visitors, and in 1759 razed the house to the ground on account of some controversy about taxes with the local authorities.

The museum of relics and curiosities in the rooms adjoining the kitchen and chamber above, in the house of John Shakespeare, contains early editions of the plays, unimportant engravings, a ring with the initials W. S., a chair, and a sword supposed to have belonged to the poet, some contemporary deeds and writings, and a letter to him from a neighbor entreating the loan of thirty pounds. Few traces of his closing days in Stratford remain. He was an exacting creditor, had some trivial transactions with the corporation, and took an active interest in municipal affairs. He died suddenly, April 23, 1616. His son-in-law, Dr. John Hall, the husband of Susanna, was the leading physician of Stratford, and a practitioner of considerable repute. He left notes of important cases in which he officiated, and their treatment. He would naturally have attended Shakespeare in his last illness, but he makes no mention of the case, nor of the cause of his death. Reverend John Ward, who was vicar of Stratford nearly fifty years afterward, wrote in his diary—"Shakespeare, Drayton, and Ben Jonson had a merie meeting and it seems drank too hard, for Shakespeare died of a feavour there contracted." The old sanctuary in which he was buried is a noble specimen of decorated gothic architecture, a cruciform structure of yellowish-gray stone, with low eaves and broad sheltering roof, from the midst of which rises a square battlemented tower with slender pointed spire. It is approached by a paved stone path bordered with limes, leading from the highway through the graveyard where, beneath a twilight of shade, many generations of the rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep. Along the venerable aisles of the nave and in the transept, are effigies and memorial tablets disclosed in the dim religious light. The chancel is disproportionately spacious and has high stained-glass windows at the sides and end. In front of the altar, beneath slabs of gray stone, are the graves of Shakespeare and his family. The widow, who survived him seven years, lies nearest the wall, and on the other side Susanna and her husband, Dr. Hall. The removal of the dust to Westminster Abbey has been prevented by the profane imprecation of the inexplicable epitaph by which the tenant of the tomb, as if in anticipation of the irreconcilable mysteries posterity would discover in his history, bequeathed an undying curse to him who should disturb his repose.

Some distance away, and at a considerable height in the north wall of the chancel, upon a bracket between two windows, is a half-length bust of Shakespeare with a pedantic Latin inscription. It was placed in 1623 by Dr. Hall, and being so nearly contemporary, may be considered a portrait. A few years ago the church authorities permitted an American artist to erect a platform from which to study the work minutely. He found one cheek-bone higher than the other, and was of opinion, from the position of the lips and tongue, that it was modelled from a cast taken after death. It is a beefy, commonplace countenance, heavy, dull, and vacant, rendered trivial and conceited by foppish mustaches curled up beneath the nostrils. It bears little resemblance to the familiar Droeshout portrait engraved for the first edition of the plays, and still less to the so-called Stratford portrait exhibited at the museum on Henley Street. This picture was discovered many years ago in the shop of a London antiquarian by an unknown person, who thought the upper part of the head resembled Shakespeare's. The face bore a heavy beard, which was supposed to have been added to save the work from destruction by the Puritans! As the incidents are related there is no evidence of its genuineness or authenticity. One of the chief attractions of the Memorial Museum in the lovely park near the church, on the banks of the Avon, is a series of photographs of a plaster cast purporting to be a death-mask of Shakespeare, now in the possession of some German potentate, which one of the most eminent English judges declares to be established by evidence sufficient to maintain any proposition in a court of law. It should be genuine, if it is not, for it represents the loftiest and noblest type of the Anglo-Saxon race. The other portraits are vapid, affected, and conventional, without character or expression ; but this is superb. The broad imperial brow, the firm, aquiline, and sensitive nose, the mouth proud, humorous, and passionate, the full orbits of the eyes, and the resolute, massive jaw, all indicate a temperament and brain of which the greatest deeds in letters, arts, or arms, might be confidently predicted.

A few weeks before his death Shakespeare made a will, bequeathing all his landed property in strict entail to his eldest daughter. This document is preserved at Somerset House, a vast government building in London, adjoining Waterloo Bridge, between the Strand and the Victoria Embankment, where the probate records of the kingdom are deposited. It is locked in a buff leather case with an engraved inscription on a brass disk on the lid. It is written on three large square separate sheets of heavy paper, discolored by time. Each sheet is laid flat and sealed between two plates of clear glass, so that both sides can be inspected. The handwriting of the scrivener in the body of the instrument is quite distinct and legible, considering its antiquity. The signature of Shakespeare appears at the bottom of each sheet. The chirography of men of genius is proverbially bad, generally from its fluent facility, but the autographs of Shakespeare are clumsy, uncouth, and awkward, their disconnected and sprawling letters seeming to have been formed with difficulty by fingers unfamiliar with the use of the pen. They may perhaps have been written in an unaccustomed position, or when the testator was enfeebled by disease. It could not have been the infirmity of age, for he was but fifty-two when he died. It is impossible to look at these signatures without receiving the impression that they were written by an illiterate man. It is not merely their illegibility, but they have the scrawly curves and uncertain terminations of the penman who is not certain about the spelling of his own name. The great collections of London contain many manuscripts of celebrated authors, ancient and modern, and some that are hard to decipher, but there is no chirography more hopelessly and irreclaimably unlettered and unscholarly than that of William Shakespeare.

At the shrine by the placid Avon, which the centuries have invested with their pensive and resistless charm, and over which genius has cast its enchanting spell, an impassable gulf seems fixed between the Shakespeare of Stratford and the Shakespeare of London. They appear like two entirely different and almost irreconcilable personalities. All that is known of either renders all that is claimed for the other improbable. Many dual lives have been lived before and since, but none seem so incompatible as these.

It is unlikely that the claim of Shakespeare to the authorship of the dramas that bear his name will ever be overthrown. His title has been too long conceded to be successfully contested. That he wrote them can now be neither proved nor refuted, but there are inherent improbabilities that must always make the Shakespearean legend a profoundly fascinating subject of psychological consideration.

And were he to be dethroned, to whom should the sceptre and the crown be given? Lord Bacon had a kingly soul, capacious great thoughts, and high designs, but no one who has read his metrical translation of the Psalms of David will be troubled again with doubts whether he was the writer also of "Macbeth," "Othello," and "Lear." Compared with these sterile, bald, and mechanical quatrains, the sacred hymns of Isaac Watts are howling and bacchanalian anacreontics, to be hiccoughed by drunkards in their most abandoned hours of revelry.

Pondering upon the mystery as I walked up and down beneath the flaring lights, on the windy platform at Bletchley, waiting, after a day at Stratford, for a belated train to London, I reflected that genius has no pedigree nor prescription, and that at last the greatest marvel was, not that the tragedy of "Hamlet" was written by Shakespeare, but that it was written at all.

John James Ingalls

MOLIÈRE

Extracts from "Molière," by **Sir Walter Scott**

(1622–1673)

Jean-Baptiste Poquelin was christened at Paris, January 15, 1622. His family consisted of decent burghers, who had for two or three generations followed the business of manufacturers of tapestry, or dealers in that commodity. Jean Poquelin, the father of the poet, also enjoyed the office of valet-de-chambre in the royal household. He endeavored to bring his son up to the same business, but finding that it was totally inconsistent with the taste and temper of the young Jean-Baptiste, he placed him at the Jesuits' College of Clermont, now the College of Louis-le-Grand. Young Poquelin had scarcely terminated his course of philosophy when, having obtained the situation of assistant and successor to his father, in his post of valet-de-chambre to the king, he was called on to attend Louis XIII. in a tour to Narbonne, which lasted nearly a year. Doubtless, the opportunities which this journey afforded him, of comparing the manners and follies of the royal court and of the city of Paris, with those which he found still existing in the provincial towns and among the rural noblesse, were not lost upon the poet by whose satirical power they were destined to be immortalized.

On his return to Paris, young Poquelin commenced the study of the law; nay, it appears probable that he was actually admitted an advocate. But the name of Molière must be added to the long list of those who have become conspicuous for success in the fine arts, having first adopted the pursuit of them in contradiction to the will of their parents; and in whom, according to Voltaire, nature has proved stronger than education.

Instead of frequenting the courts, Jean-Baptiste Poquelin was an assiduous attendant upon such companies of players as then amused the metropolis, and at length placed himself at the head of a society of young men, who began by acting plays for amusement, and ended by performing with a view to emolument. His parents were greatly distressed by the step he had taken. He had plunged himself into a profession which the law pronounced infamous, and nothing short of rising to the very top of it could restore his estimation in society. Whatever internal confidence of success the young Poquelin might himself feel, his chance of being extricated from the degradation to which he had subjected himself must have seemed very precarious to others; and we cannot be surprised that his relations were mortified and displeased with his conduct. To conciliate their prejudices as much as possible, he dropped the appellation of Poquelin and assumed that of Molière, that he might not tarnish the family name. But with what indifference should we now read the name of Poquelin, had it never been conjoined with that of Molière, devised to supersede and conceal it! It appears that the liberal sentiments of the royal court left Molière in possession of his office, notwithstanding his change of profession.

From the year 1646 to 1653, it is only known that Molière travelled through France as the manager of a company of strolling players. It is said that with the natural turn of young authors, who are more desirous to combine scenes of strong emotion than of comic situation, he attempted to produce a tragedy called "The Thebaid." Its indifferent success disgusted him with the buskin; and it may be observed, that in proportion as he affects, in other compositions, anything approaching to the tragic, his admirable facility of expression seems to abandon him, and he becomes stiff and flat.

In the year 1653 Molière's brilliant comedy of "L'Étourdi" was performed at Lyons, and gave a noble presage of the talents of its illustrious author. The piece is known to English readers by a translation entitled "Sir Martin Marplot," made originally by the celebrated Duke of Newcastle, and adapted to the stage by the pen of Dryden. The piece turns upon the schemes formed by a clever and intriguing valet to facilitate the union betwixt his master and the heroine of the scene, all of which are successively baffled and disconcerted by the bustling interference of the lover himself. The French original has infinitely the superiority; the character of the luckless lover is drawn with an exquisitely finer pencil. Lélie is an inconsequential, light-headed, gentleman-like coxcomb, but Sir Martin Marplot is a fool. In the English drama, the author seems to have considered his hero as so thoroughly stupid, that he rewards the address of the intriguing domestic with the hand of the lady. The French author gave no occasion for this gross indecorum. "L'Étourdi" was followed by "Le Dépit Amoureux," an admirable entertainment; although the French critics bestow some censure on both for a carelessness of style to which a foreigner may profess himself indifferent. Both these performances were received with the greatest applause by numerous audiences; and as far as the approbation of provincial theatres could confer reputation, that of Molière was now established.

There was, however, a temptation which threatened to withdraw him from the worship of Thalia. This was an offer on the part of the Prince of Conti, who had been his condisciple at college, to create Molière his secretary. He declined this, on account of his devoted attachment to his own profession, strengthened on this occasion, perhaps, by his knowledge how the place had become vacant. This, it seems, was by the death of Sarrasin (who had held the office), in consequence of *un mauvais traitement de Monseigneur le Prince de Conti.* In plain English, the prince had, with the fire-tongs, knocked down his secretary, who never recovered from the effects of the blow. It is probable that, notwithstanding the laurel chaplet worn by Molière, he had little faith in the *sic evitabile fulmen.*

This was in 1654. He continued to perambulate the provinces with his company for several years longer; in 1658 he returned to Paris, and at last, through the influence of his patron the Prince of Conti, was introduced to Monsieur, the king's brother, and by him presented to the king and queen. On October 24th, his company performed in presence of the royal family, and he obtained the royal license to open a theatre under the title of "Troupe de Monsieur," in opposition to, or in emulation of, the comedians of the Hôtel de Bourgogne. The pieces which Molière had already composed were received with great favor, but it was not until 1659, that he commenced the honorable satirical war upon folly and affectation which he waged for so many years. It was then that he produced "Les Précieuses Ridicules."

The piece was acted for the first time November 18, 1659, and received with unanimous applause. The public, like children admitted behind the scenes, saw, with wonder and mirth, the trumpery which they had admired as crowns, sceptres, and royal robes, when beheld at a distance—thus learning to estimate at their real value the affected airs of super-excellence and transcendental elegance assumed by the frequenters of the Hôtel de Rambouillet.

On the other hand, the party which was consequently made the laughing-stock of the theatre were much hurt and offended, nor was the injury at all the lighter that some of them had sense enough to feel that the chastisement was deserved. They had no remedy, however, but to swallow their chagrin and call themselves by their own names in future. Menage expressed his own recantation in the words of Clovis, when he became a convert to Christianity, and told his assembled Franks they must now burn the idols which they had hitherto adored. The affectation of the period, such as we have described it, received a blow no less effectual than that which Ben Jonson, by his satire called "Cynthia's Revels," inflicted on the kindred folly of euphuism, or as the author of "The Baviad and Mæviad" dealt to similar affectations of our own day. But Molière made a body of formidable enemies among the powerful and learned, whose false pretensions to wit and elegance he had so rudely exposed.

Two things were remarkable as attending the representation of this excellent satire: first, that an old man, starting up in the parterre, exclaimed, "Courage, Molière, this is real comedy!" and, secondly, that the author himself, perceiving from the general applause that he had touched the true vein of composition, declared his purpose henceforward to read his lessons from the human bosom, instead of studying the pages of Terence and Plautus.

After an unsuccessful effort at a serious piece ("Don Garcie de Navarre, ou Le Prince Jaloux"), Molière resumed his natural bent; and in "L'École des Maris" presented one of his best compositions, and at once obliterated all recollection of his failure. It was acted at Paris with unanimous applause, and again represented at the magnificent entertainment given by the superintendent of finances, Fouquet, to Louis XIV. and his splendid court.

"L'École des Femmes" was Molière's next work of importance. It is a comedy of the highest order. An old gentleman, who had been an intriguer in his youth and knew (as he flattered himself) all the wiles of womankind, endeavors to avoid what he considers as the usual fate of husbands, by marrying his ward, a beautiful girl, simple almost to silliness, but to whom nature has given as much of old mother Eve's talent for persuasion and imposition as enables her to baffle all the schemes of her aged admirer and unite herself to a young gallant more suited to her age. The "Country Wife" of Wycherly is an imitation of this piece, with the demerit on the part of the English author of having rendered licentious a plot which, in Molière's hands, is only gay.

Although this piece was well received and highly applauded, it was at the same time severely criticised by those who had swallowed without digesting the ridicule which the author had heaped on the Hôtel de Rambouillet in the "Précieuses Ridicules," and on the various conceits and follies of the court in "Les Fâcheux." Such critics having shown themselves too wise to express the pain which they felt on their own account, now set up as guardians of the purity of the national morals and language. A *naive* expression used by Agnes was represented as depraving the one; a low and somewhat vulgar phrase was insisted upon as calculated to ruin the other. This affected severity in morals and grammar did not impose on the public, who were quite aware of the motives of critics who endeavored to ground such formidable charges on foundations so limited. The celebrated Boileau drew his pen in defence of his friend, in whose most burlesque expression there truly lurked a learned and useful moral: "Let the envious exclaim against thee," he said, "because thy scenes are agreeable to all the vulgar; if thou wert less acquainted with the art of pleasing, thou wouldst be enabled to please even thy censors." Molière himself wrote a defence of "L'École des Femmes," "in which," says M. Taschereau, "he had the good fortune to escape the most dangerous fault of an author writing upon his own compositions, and to exhibit wit where some people would only have shown vanity and self-conceit."

In the evening of the same day which saw his next comedy, "Le Mariage Forcé," there came out as a part of the royal fête, the three first acts, or rough sketch, of the celebrated satire, entitled "Tartuffe," one of the most powerful of Molière's compositions. It was applauded, but from the clamor excited against the poet and the performance, as an attack on religion, instead of its impious and insidious adversary, hypocrisy, the representation was for the time interdicted; a fortunate circumstance, perhaps, since in consequence the drama underwent a sedulous revision, given by Molière to few of his performances.

"Le Festin de Pierre"—the Feast of the Statue—well known to the modern stage under the name of "Don Juan," was the next vehicle of Molière's satire. The story, borrowed from the Spanish, is well known. In giving the sentiments of the libertine Spaniard, the author of "Tartuffe" could not suppress his resentment against the party, by whose interest with the king that piece had been excluded from the stage, or at least its representation suspended. "The profession of a hypocrite," says Don Juan, "has marvellous advantages. The imposture is always respected, and although it may be detected, must never be condemned. Other human vices are exposed to censure and may be attacked boldly. Hypocrisy alone enjoys a privilege which stops the mouth of the satirist, and enjoys the repose of sovereign impunity." This expression, with some other passages in the piece (the general tenor of which is certainly not very edifying), called down violent clamors upon the imprudent author; some critics went so far as to invoke the spiritual censure and the doom of the civil magistrate on Molière as the atheist of his own "Festin de Pierre." He was, however, on this as on other occasions, supported by the decided favor of the king, who then allowed Molière's company to take the title of "Comédiens du Roi," and bestowed on them a pension of 7,000 livres, thereby showing how little he was influenced by the clamors of the poet's enemies, though attacking his mind on a weak point.

In the month of September, 1665, the king having commanded such an entertainment to be prepared, the sketch or impromptu called "L'Amour Médecin" was, in the course of five days, composed, got up, as the players call it, and represented. In this sketch, slight as it was, Molière contrived to declare war against a new and influential body of enemies. This was the medical faculty, which he had slightly attacked in the "Festin de Pierre." Every science has its weak points, and is rather benefited than injured by the satire which, putting pedantry and quackery out of fashion, opens the way to an enlightened pursuit of knowledge. The medical faculty at Paris, in the middle of the seventeenth century, was at a very low ebb. Almost every physician was attached to some particular form of treatment, which he exercised on his patients without distinction, and which probably killed in as many instances as it effected a cure. Their exterior, designed, doubtless, to inspire respect by its peculiar garb and formal manner, was in itself matter of ridicule. They ambled on mules through the city of Paris, attired in an antique and grotesque dress, the jest of its laughter-loving people, and the dread of those who were unfortunate enough to be their patients. The consultations of these sages were conducted in a barbarous Latinity, or if they condescended to use the popular language, they disfigured it with unnecessary profusion of technical terms, or rendered it unintelligible by a prodigal tissue of scholastic formalities of expression.

The venerable dulness and pedantic ignorance of the faculty was incensed at the ridicule cast upon it in "L'Amour Médecin," especially as four of its most distinguished members were introduced under Greek names, invented by Boileau for his friend's use. The consultation held by these sages, which respects everything save the case of the patient—the ceremonious difficulty with which they are at first brought to deliver their opinions—the vivacity and fury with which each finally defends his own, menacing the instant death of the patient if any other treatment be observed, seemed all to the public highly comical, and led many reflecting men to think Lisette was not far wrong in contending that a patient should not be said to die of a fever or a consumption, but of four doctors and two apothecaries. The farce enlarged the sphere of Molière's enemies, but as the poet suffered none of the faculty to prescribe for him, their resentment was of the less consequence.

The "Misanthrope," accounted by the French critics the most correct of Molière's compositions, was the next vehicle of his satire against the follies of the age. Except for the usual fault of his gratuitously adopted coarseness, it is admirably imitated in the "Plain Dealer," of Wycherly. Alceste is an upright and manly character, but rude, and impatient even of the ordinary civilities of life and the harmless hypocrisies of complaisance, by which the ugliness of human nature is in some degree disguised. He quarrels with his friend Philinte for receiving the bow of a man he despises; and with his mistress for enjoying a little harmless ridicule of her friend, when her back is turned. He tells a conceited poet that he prefers the sense and simplicity of an old ballad to the false wit of a modern sonnet—he proves his judgment to be just—and receives a challenge from the poet in reward of his criticism. Such a character, placed in opposition to the false and fantastic affectations of the day, afforded a wide scope for the satire of Molière. The situation somewhat resembles that of Eraste, in "Les Fâcheux." But the latter personage is only interrupted by fools and impostors during a walk in the Tuileries, where he expects to meet his mistress; the distress of Alceste lies deeper—he is thwarted by pretenders and coxcombs in the paths of life itself, and his peculiar temper renders him impatient of being pressed and shouldered by them; so that, like an irritable man in a crowd, he resents those inconveniences to which men of equanimity submit, not as a matter of choice, indeed, but as a point of necessity. The greater correctness of this piece may be owing to the lapse of nine months (an unusual term of repose for the muse of Molière) betwixt the appearance of "L'Amour Médecin" and that of the "Misanthrope." Yet this chef-d'œuvre was at first coldly received by the Parisian audience, and to render it more attractive, Molière was compelled to attach to its representation the lively farce of "Le Médecin malgré lui." In a short time the merit of the "Misanthrope" became acknowledged by the public, and even many of those critics who had hitherto been hostile, united in its praise. Yet scandal was not silent; for Molière was loudly censured, as having, in the person of Alceste, ridiculed the Duke de Montausier, a man of honor and virtue, but of blunt, uncourteous manners. The duke, informed that he had been brought on the stage by Molière, threatened vengeance; but being persuaded to see the play, he sought out the author instantly, embraced him repeatedly, and assured him that if he had really thought of him when composing the "Misanthrope," he regarded it as an honor which he could never forget.

But not even the praises paid to the "Misanthrope," though a piece of a mood much higher than "Le Médecin malgré lui," satisfied Molière. "*Vous verrez bien autre chose*," said he to Boileau, when the latter congratulated him on the success of the chef-d'œuvre which we have just named. He anticipated the success of the most remarkable of his performances, the celebrated "Tartuffe," in which he has unmasked and branded vice, as in his lighter pieces he has chastised folly. This piece had been acted before Louis, before his queen, and his mother, and at the palace of the great Prince of Condé; but the scruples infused into the king long induced him to hesitate ere he removed the interdict which prohibited its representation. Neither were these scruples yet removed. Permission was, indeed, given to represent the piece, but under the title of the "Impostor," and calling the principal person Panulphe, for it seems the name of Tartuffe was particularly offensive. The king, having left Paris for the army, the president of the parliament of Paris prohibited any further representation of the obnoxious piece, thus disguised, although licensed by his majesty. Louis did not resent this interference, and two compositions of Molière were interposed betwixt the date of the suspension which we have noticed, and the final permission to bring "Tartuffe" on the stage. These were, "Mélicerte," a species of heroic pastoral, in which Molière certainly did not excel, and "Le Sicilien, ou L'Amour Peintre," a few lively scenes linked together, so as to form a pleasing introduction to several of those dances in costume, or ballets, as they were called, in which Louis himself often assumed a character.

At length, in August, 1667, "Le Tartuffe," so long suppressed, appeared on the stage, and in the depth and power of its composition left all authors of comedy far behind. The art with which the "Impostor" is made to develop his real character, without any of the usual soliloquies or addresses to a confidant, for the benefit of the audience, has been always admired as inimitable. The heart of a man who had least desired, and could worst bear close investigation, is discovered and ascertained, as navigators trace the lines and bearings of an unknown coast. The persons among whom this illustrious hypocrite performs the principal character, are traced with equal distinctness. The silly old mother, obstinate from age as well as bigotry; the modest and sensible Cléante; his brother-in-law, Orgon, prepared to be a dupe by prepossession and self-opinion; Damis, impetuous and unreflecting; Mariane, gentle and patient; with the hasty and petulant sallies of Dorine, who ridicules the family she serves with affection ; are all faithfully drawn, and contribute their own share on the effect of the piece, while they assist in bringing on the catastrophe. In this catastrophe, however, there is something rather inartificial. It is brought about too much by a *tour de force*, too entirely by the *de par le roi*, to deserve the praise bestowed on the rest of the piece. It resembles, in short, too nearly the receipt for making the "Beggars' Opera" end happily, by sending someone to call out a reprieve. But as it manifested at the same time the power of the prince, and afforded opportunity for panegyric on his acuteness in detecting and punishing fraud, Molière, it is certain, might have his own good reasons for unwinding and disentangling the plot by means of an *exempt* or king's messenger.

"George Dandin" was acted July 18, 1668. On September 3, in the same year, the moral comedy of "L'Avare" was presented to the public by the fertile muse of our author. The general conception of the piece, as well as many of the individual scenes, are taken from Plautus, but adapted to French society with a degree of felicity belonging to Molière alone. Omitting "Les Amants Magnifiques," called by Molière a minor comedy, but which may be rather considered as a piece of framework for the introduction of scenic pageantry, and which is only distinguished by some satirical shafts directed against the now obsolete folly of judicial astrology, we hasten to notice a masterpiece of Molière's art in "Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme." This piece was written to please the court and gentry, at the expense of the *nouveaux riches*, who, rendered wealthy by the sudden acquisition of immense fortune, become desirous to emulate such as have been educated in the front ranks of society, in those accomplishments, whether mental or personal, which cannot be gracefully acquired after the early part of life is past. A grave, elderly gentleman learning to dance is proverbially ridiculous ; but the same absurdity attaches to everyone who, suddenly elevated from his own sphere, becomes desirous of imitating, in the most minute particulars, those who are denizens of that to which he is raised. It is scarcely necessary to notice that the ridicule directed against such characters as Monsieur Jourdain properly applies, not to their having made their fortunes, if by honest means, but to their being ambitious to distinguish themselves by qualities inconsistent with their age, habits of thinking, and previous manners.

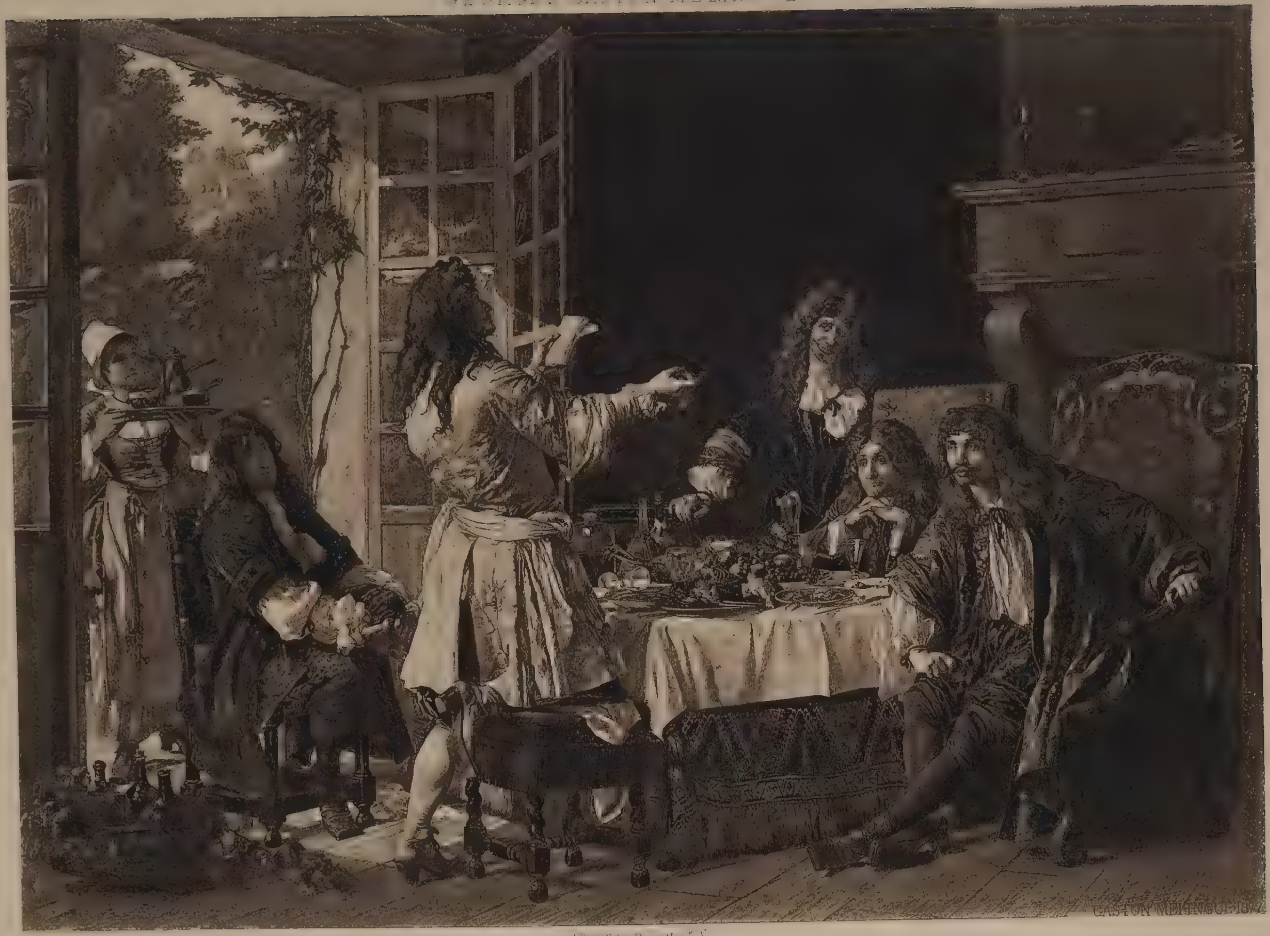
The last of this great author's labors was at once directed against the faculty of medicine, and aimed at its most vulnerable point—namely, the influence used by some unworthy members of the profession to avail themselves of the nervous fears and unfounded apprehensions of hypochondriac patients. Instead of treating imaginary maladies as a mental disease requiring moral medicine, there have been found in all times medical men capable of listening to the rehearsal of these brain-sick whims as if they were real complaints, prescribing for them as such, and receiving the wages of imposition, instead of the honorable reward of science. On the other hand, it must be admitted that the faculty has always possessed members of a spirit to condemn and regret such despicable practices. There cannot be juster objects of satire than such empirics, nor is there a foible more deserving of ridicule than the selfish timidity of the hypochondriac, who, ungrateful for the store of good health with which nature has endowed him, assumes the habitual precautions of an infirm patient.

Molière has added much to the humor of the piece by assigning to the Malade Imaginaire a strain of frugality along with his love of medicine, which leads him to take every mode that may diminish the expense of his supposed indisposition. The expenses of a sick-bed are often talked of, but it is only the imaginary valetudinarian who thinks of carrying economy into that department; the real patient has other things to think of. Argan, therefore, is discovered taxing his apothecary's bill, at once delighting his ear with the flowery language of the pharmacopœia, and gratifying his frugal disposition by clipping off some items and reducing others, and arriving at the double conclusion, first, that if his apothecary does not become more reasonable, he cannot afford to be a sick man any longer; and secondly, that as he has swallowed fewer drugs by one-third this month than he had done the last, it was no wonder that he was not so well. The inference, "*Je le dirai à Monsieur Purgon, afin qu'il mette ordre à cela*," is irresistibly comic.

As the Malade Imaginaire was the last character in which Molière appeared, it is here necessary to say a few words upon his capacity as an actor. He bore, according to one contemporary, and with justice, the first rank among the performers of his line. He was a comedian from top to toe. He seemed to possess more voices than one; besides which, every limb had its expression—a step in advance or retreat, a wink, a smile, a nod, expressed more in his action, than the greatest talker could explain in words in the course of an hour. He was, says another contemporary, neither corpulent nor otherwise, rather above the middle size, with a noble carriage and well-formed limbs; he walked with dignity, had a very serious aspect, the nose and mouth rather large, with full lips, a dark complexion, the eyebrows black and strongly marked, and a command of countenance which rendered his physiognomy formed to express comedy. A less friendly pen (that of the author of "L'Inpromptu de l'Hôtel de Condé") has caricatured Molière as coming on the stage with his head thrown habitually back, his nose turned up into the air, his hands on his sides with an affectation of negligence, and (what would seem in England a gross affectation, but which was tolerated in Paris as an expression of the *superbia quæsita meritis*) his peruke always environed by a crown of laurels. But the only real defect in his performance arose from an habitual *hoquet*, or slight hiccough, which he had acquired by attempting to render himself master of an extreme volubility of enunciation, but which his exquisite art contrived on almost all occasions successfully to disguise.

Thus externally fitted for his art, there can be no doubt that he who possessed so much comedy in his conceptions of character, must have had equal judgment and taste in the theatrical expression, and that only the poet himself could fully convey what he alone could have composed. He performed the principal character in almost all his own pieces, and adhered to the stage even when many motives occurred to authorize his retirement.

GEORGES GASTON MELINGUE



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We do not reckon it any great temptation to Molière that the Academy should have opened its arms to receive him, under condition that he would abandon the profession of an actor; but the reason which he assigned for declining to purchase the honor at the rate proposed is worthy of being mentioned. "What can induce you to hesitate?" said Boileau, charged by the Academicians with the negotiation. "A point of honor," replied Molière. "Now," answered his friend, "what honor can lie in blacking your face with mustachios and assuming the burlesque disguise of a buffoon, in order to be cudgelled on a public stage?" "The point of honor," answered Molière, "consists in my not deserting more than a hundred persons, whom my personal exertions are necessary to support." The Academy afterward did honor to themselves and justice to Molière by placing his bust in their hall, with this tasteful and repentant inscription:

"Nothing is wanting to the glory of Molière. Molière was wanting to ours!"

That Molière alleged no false excuse for continuing on the stage, was evident when, in the latter years of his life, his decaying health prompted him strongly to resign. He had been at all times of a delicate constitution, and liable to pulmonary affections, which were rather palliated than cured by submission during long intervals to a milk diet, and by frequenting the country, for which purpose he had a villa at Auteuil, near Paris. The malady grew more alarming from time to time, and the exertions of voice and person required by the profession tended to increase its severity. On February 17, 1673, he became worse than usual. Baron, an actor of the highest rank and of his own training, joined with the rest of the company in remonstrating against their patron going on in the character of Argan. Molière answered them in the same spirit which dictated his reply to Boileau. "There are fifty people," he said, "who must want their daily bread, if the spectacle is put off. I should reproach myself with their distress if I suffered them to sustain such a loss, having the power to prevent it."

He acted accordingly that evening, but suffered most cruelly in the task of disguising his sense of internal pain. A singular contrast it was betwixt the state of the actor and the fictitious character which he represented. Molière was disguising his real and, as it proved, his dying agonies, in order to give utterance and interest to the feigned or fancied complaints of Le Malade Imaginaire, and repressing the voice of mortal sufferance to affect that of an imaginary hypochondriac. At length, on arriving at the concluding interlude, in which, assenting to the oath administered to him as the candidate for medical honors in the mock ceremonial, by which he engages to adminster the remedies prescribed by the ancients, whether right or wrong, and never to use any other than those approved by the college, as Molière, in the character of Argan, replied, "Juro," the faculty had a full and fatal revenge. The wheel was broken at the cistern—he had fallen in a convulsive fit. The entertainment was hurried to a conclusion, and Molière was carried home. His cough returned with violence, and he was found to have burst a blood-vessel. A priest was sent for, and two scrupulous ecclesiastics of Saint Eustace's parish distinguished themselves by refusing to administer the last consolations to a player and the author of "Tartuffe." A third, of better principles, came too late; Molière was insensible, and choked by the quantity of blood which he could not discharge. Two poor Sisters of Charity who had often experienced his bounty, supported him as he expired.

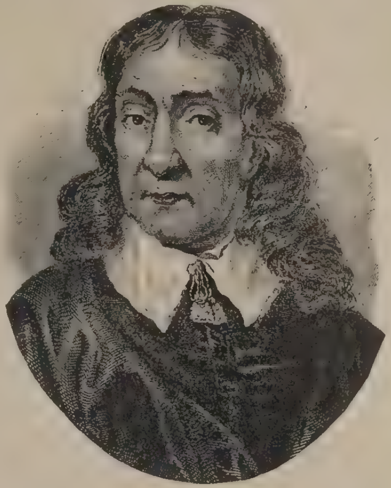
Bigotry persecuted to the grave the lifeless reliques of the man of genius. Harlai, Archbishop of Paris, who himself died of the consequences of a course of continued debauchery, thought it necessary to show himself as intolerantly strict in form as he was licentious in practice. He forbade the burial of a comedian's remains. Madame Molière went to throw herself at the feet of Louis XIV., but with impolitic temerity her petition stated, that if her deceased husband had been criminal in composing and acting dramatic pieces, his majesty, at whose command and for whose amusement he had done so, must be criminal also. This argument, though in itself unanswerable, was too bluntly stated to be favorably received; Louis dismissed the suppliant with the indifferent answer, that the matter depended on the Archbishop of Paris. The king, however, sent private orders to Harlai to revoke the interdict against the decent burial of the man, whose talents during his lifetime his majesty had delighted to honor. The funeral took place accordingly, but, like that of Ophelia, "with maimed rites." The curate of Saint Eustace had directions not to give his attendance, and the corpse was transported from his place of residence and taken to the burial-ground without being, as usual, presented at the parish church. This was not all. A large assemblage of the lower classes seemed to threaten an interruption of the funeral ceremony. But their fanaticism was not proof against a thousand francs which the widow of Molière dispersed among them from the windows, thus purchasing for the remains of her husband an uninterrupted passage to their last abode.

JOHN MILTON

(1608–1674)

John Milton was born in London on December 9, 1608. His father, in early life, had suffered for conscience sake, having been disinherited upon his abjuring the Catholic faith. He pursued the laborious profession of a scrivener, and having realized an ample fortune, retired into the country to enjoy it. Educated at Oxford, he gave his son the best education that the age afforded. At first young Milton had the benefit of a private tutor; from him he was removed to St. Paul's school; next he proceeded to Christ's College, Cambridge; and finally, after several years preparation by extensive reading, he pursued a course of continental travel. It is to be observed that his tutor, Thomas Young, was a Puritan, and there is reason to believe that Puritan politics prevailed among the fellows of his college.

This must not be forgotten in speculating on Milton's public life, and his inexorable hostility to the established government in church and state; for it will thus appear probable that he was at no time withdrawn from the influence of Puritan connections.



In 1632, having taken the degree of M.A., Milton finally quitted the University, leaving behind him a very brilliant reputation, and a general good-will in his own college. His father had now retired from London, and lived upon his own estate at Horton, in Buckinghamshire. In this rural solitude Milton passed the next five years, resorting to London only at rare intervals, for the purchase of books or music. His time was chiefly occupied with the study of Greek and Roman, and, no doubt, also of Italian literature. But that he was not negligent of composition, and that he applied himself with great zeal to the culture of his native literature, we have a splendid record in his "Comus," which, upon the strongest presumptions, is ascribed to this period of his life. In the same neighborhood, and within the same five years, it is believed that he produced also the "Arcades," and the "Lycidas," together with "L'Allegro," and "Il Penseroso."

In 1637 Milton's mother died, and in the following year he commenced his travels. The state of Europe confined his choice of ground to France and Italy. The former excited in him but little interest. After a short stay at Paris he pursued the direct route to Nice, where he embarked for Genoa, and thence proceeded to Pisa, Florence, Rome, and Naples.

Sir Henry Wotton had recommended, as the rule of his conduct, a celebrated Italian proverb, inculcating the policy of reserve and dissimulation. From a practised diplomatist, this advice was characteristic; but it did not suit the frankness of Milton's manners, nor the nobleness of his mind. He has himself stated to us his own rule of conduct, which was to move no questions of controversy, yet not to evade them when pressed upon him by others. Upon this principle he acted, not without some offence to his associates, nor wholly without danger to himself. But the offence, doubtless, was blended with respect; the danger was passed; and he returned home with all his purposes fulfilled. He had conversed with Galileo; he had seen whatever was most interesting in the monuments of Roman grandeur, or the triumphs of Italian art; and he could report with truth that, in spite of his religion, everywhere undissembled, he had been honored by the attentions of the great, and by the compliments of the learned.

After fifteen months of absence, Milton found himself again in London at a crisis of unusual interest. The king was on the eve of his second expedition against the Scotch ; and we may suppose Milton to have been watching the course of events with profound anxiety, not without some anticipation of the patriotic labor which awaited him. Meantime he occupied himself with the education of his sister's two sons, and soon after, by way of obtaining an honorable maintenance, increased the number of his pupils.

In 1641 he conducted his defence of ecclesiastical liberty, in a series of attacks upon episcopacy. These are written in a bitter spirit of abusive hostility, for which we seek an insufficient apology in his exclusive converse with a party which held bishops in abhorrence, and in the low personal respectability of a large portion of the episcopal bench.

At Whitsuntide, in the year 1643, having reached his thirty-fifth year, he married Mary Powell, a young lady of good extraction in the county of Oxford. In 1644 he wrote his "Areopagitica, a speech for the liberty of unlicensed printing." This we are to consider in the light of an oral pleading, or regular oration, for he tells us expressly [Def. 2] that he wrote it "ad justæ orationis modum." It is the finest specimen extant of generous scorn. And very remarkable it is, that Milton, who broke the ground on this great theme, has exhausted the arguments which bear upon it. He opened the subject : he closed it. And were there no other monument of his patriotism and his genius, for this alone he would deserve to be held in perpetual veneration. In the following year, 1645, was published the first collection of his early poems ; with his sanction, undoubtedly, but probably not upon his suggestion. The times were too full of anxiety to allow of much encouragement to polite literature ; at no period were there fewer readers of poetry. And for himself in particular, with the exception of a few sonnets, it is probable that he composed as little as others read, for the next ten years ; so great were his political exertions.

In 1649, soon after King Charles was put to death, the Council of State resolved to use the Latin tongue in their international concerns, instead of French. The office of Latin Secretary, therefore, was created, and bestowed upon Milton. His hours from henceforth must have been pretty well occupied by official labors. He was one of the most prominent men in his party, a close friend to Cromwell, who frequently visited him ; and his advice was sought on all questions of importance. Yet at this time he undertook a service to the state, more invidious, and perhaps more perilous, than any in which his politics ever involved him. On the very day of the king's execution, and even below the scaffold, had been sold the earliest copies of a work admirably fitted to shake the new government, and for the sensation which it produced at the time, and the lasting controversy which it has engendered, one of the most remarkable known in literary history. This was the "Eikon Basilike, or Royal Image," professing to be a series of meditations drawn up by the late king, on the leading events from the very beginning of the national troubles. Appearing at this critical moment, and co-operating with the strong reaction of the public mind, already effected in the king's favor by his violent death, this book produced an impression absolutely unparalleled in any age. Fifty thousand copies, it is asserted, were sold within one year ; and a posthumous power was

DAVID NEAL PINXIT.

OLIVER CROMWELL VISITS MILTON.

thus given to the king's name by one little book, which exceeded, in alarm to his enemies, all that his armies could accomplish in his lifetime. No remedy could meet the evil in degree. As the only one that seemed fitted to it in kind, Milton drew up a running commentary upon each separate head of the original; and as that had been entitled the king's image, he gave to his own the title of "Eikonoclastes, or Image-breaker," "the famous surname of many Greek emperors, who broke all superstitious images in pieces."

This work was drawn up with the usual polemic ability of Milton; but by its very plan and purpose it threw upon him difficulties which no ability could meet. It had that inevitable disadvantage which belongs to all ministerial and secondary works: the order and choice of topics being all determined by the "Eikon," Milton, for the first time, wore an air of constraint and servility, following a leader and obeying his motions, as an engraver is controlled by the designer, or a translator by the original. It is plain, from the pains he took to exonerate himself from such a reproach, that he felt his task to be an invidious one. The majesty of grief, expressing itself with Christian meekness, and appealing as it were, from the grave to the consciences of men, could not be violated without a recoil of angry feeling, ruinous to the effect of any logic or rhetoric the most persuasive. The affliction of a great prince, his solitude, his rigorous imprisonment, his constancy to some purposes which were not selfish, his dignity of demeanor in the midst of his heavy trials, and his truly Christian fortitude in his final sufferings—these formed a rhetoric which made its way to all hearts. Against such influences the eloquence of Greece would have been vain. The nation was spellbound; and a majority of its population neither could nor would be disenchanted.

Milton was ere long called to plead the same great cause of liberty upon an ampler stage, and before a more equitable audience; to plead not on behalf of his party against the Presbyterians and Royalists, but on behalf of his country against the insults of a hired Frenchman, and at the bar of the whole Christian world. Charles II. had resolved to state his father's case to all Europe. This was natural, for very few people on the continent knew what cause had brought his father to the block, or why he himself was a vagrant exile from his throne. For his advocate he selected Claudius Salmasius, and that was most injudicious. Salmasius betrayed in his work entire ignorance of everything, whether historical or constitutional, which belonged to the case.

Having such an antagonist, inferior to him in all possible qualifications, whether of nature, of art, of situation, it may be supposed that Milton's triumph was absolute. He was now thoroughly indemnified for the poor success of his "Eikonoclastes." In that instance he had the mortification of knowing that all England read and wept over the king's book, while his own reply was scarcely heard of. But here the tables were turned; the very friends of Salmasius complained that while his defence was rarely inquired after, the answer to it, "Defensio pro Populo Anglicano," was the subject of conversation from one end of Europe to the other. It was burned publicly at Paris and Toulouse; and, by way of special annoyance to Salmasius, who lived in Holland, was translated into Dutch.

In 1651 Milton's first wife died, after she had given him three daughters. In that year he had already lost the use of one eye, and was warned by the physicians that if he persisted in his task of replying to Salmasius he would probably lose the other. The warning was soon accomplished, according to the common account, in 1654; but upon collating his letter to Phalaris the Athenian, with his own pathetic statement in the "Defensio Secunda," we are disposed to date it from 1652. In 1655 he resigned his office of secretary, in which he had latterly been obliged to use an assistant.

Some time before this period he had married his second wife, Catherine Woodcock, to whom it is supposed that he was very tenderly attached. In 1657 she died in child-birth, together with her child, an event which he has recorded in a very beautiful sonnet. This loss, added to his blindness, must have made his home, for some years, desolate and comfortless. Distress, indeed, was now gathering rapidly upon him. The death of Cromwell, in the following year, and the imbecile character of his eldest son, held out an invitation to the aspiring intriguers of the day, which they were not slow to improve. It soon became too evident to Milton's discernment that all things were hurrying forward to restoration of the ejected family. Sensible of the risk, therefore, and without much hope, but obeying the summons of his conscience, he wrote a short tract on the ready and easy way to establish a free commonwealth, concluding with these noble words: "Thus much I should perhaps have said, though I were sure I should have spoken only to trees and stones, and had none to cry to, but with the Prophet, Oh earth! earth! earth! to tell the very soil itself what her perverse inhabitants are deaf to. Nay, though what I have spoken should happen [which Thou suffer not, who didst create free, nor Thou next who didst redeem us from being servants of men] to be the last words of our expiring liberty."

What he feared was soon realized. In the spring of 1660 the Restoration was accomplished amid the tumultuous rejoicings of the people. It was certain that the vengeance of government would lose no time in marking its victims; and some of them in anticipation had already fled. Milton wisely withdrew from the first fury of the persecution which now descended on his party. He secreted himself in London, and when he returned to the public eye in the winter, found himself no farther punished than by a general disqualification for the public service, and the disgrace of a public burning inflicted on his "Eikonoclastes," and his "Defensio pro Populo Anglicano."

Apparently it was not long after this time that he married his third wife, Elizabeth Minshul, a lady of good family in Cheshire. In what year he began the composition of his "Paradise Lost" is not certainly known; some have supposed in 1658. There is better ground for fixing the period of its close. During the plague of 1665 he retired to Chalfont, and at that time Elwood, the Quaker, read the poem in a finished state. The general interruption of business in London, occasioned by the plague, and prolonged by the great fire in 1666, explain why the publication was delayed for nearly two years. The contract with the publisher is dated April 26, 1667, and in the course of that year the

" Paradise Lost " was published. Originally it was printed in ten books ; in the second and subsequent editions, the seventh and tenth books were each divided into two. Milton received only £5 in the first instance on the publication of the book. His farther profits were regulated by the sale of the first three editions. Each was to consist of fifteen hundred copies, and on the second and third, respectively, reaching a sale of thirteen hundred, he was to receive a farther sum of £5 for each, making a total of £15. The receipt for the second sum of £5 is dated April 26, 1669.

In 1670 Milton published his " History of Britain," from the fabulous period of the Norman Conquest. And in the same year he published in one volume " Paradise Regained " and " Samson Agonistes." It has been currently asserted that Milton preferred the " Paradise Regained " to " Paradise Lost." This is not true ; but he may have been justly offended by the false principles on which some of his friends maintained a reasonable opinion. The " Paradise Regained " is inferior by the necessity of its subject and design. In the " Paradise Lost " Milton had a field properly adapted to a poet's purposes ; a few hints in Scripture were expanded. Nothing was altered, nothing absolutely added ; but that which was told in the Scriptures in sum, or in its last results, was developed into its whole succession of parts. Thus, for instance, " There was war in heaven," furnished the matter for a whole book. Now for the latter poem, which part of our Saviour's life was it best to select as that in which paradise was regained ? He might have taken the crucifixion, and here he had a much wider field than in the temptation ; but then he was subject to this dilemma : if he modified, or in any way altered, the full details of the four evangelists, he shocked the religious sense of all Christians ; yet, the purposes of a poet would often require that he should so modify them. With a fine sense of this difficulty, he chose the narrow basis of the temptation in the wilderness, because there the whole had been wrapped up in the Scriptures in a few brief abstractions. Thus " he showed him all the kingdoms of the earth," is expanded, without offence to the nicest religious scruple, into that matchless succession of pictures, which bring before us the learned glories of Athens, Rome in her civil grandeur, and the barbaric splendor of Parthia. The actors being only two, the action of " Paradise Regained " is unavoidably limited. But in respect of composition, it is, perhaps, more elaborately finished than " Paradise Lost."

His subsequent works are not important enough to merit a separate notice. His end was now approaching. In the summer of 1674 he was still cheerful, and in the possession of his intellectual faculties. But the vigor of his bodily constitution had been silently giving way, through a long course of years, to the ravages of gout. It was at length thoroughly undermined ; and about November 10, 1674, he died with tranquillity so profound that his attendants were unable to determine the exact moment of his decease. He was buried, with unusual marks of honor, in the chancel of St. Giles at Cripplegate.

JOHN BUNYAN

By John Greenleaf Whittier

(1628–1688)

> "Wouldst see
> A man i' the clouds, and hear him speak to thee?"

Who has not read "Pilgrim's Progress?" Who has not, in childhood, followed the wandering Christian on his way to the Celestial City? Who has not laid at night his young head on the pillow, to paint on the walls of darkness pictures of the Wicket Gate and the Archers, the Hill of Difficulty, the Lions and Giants, Doubting Castle and Vanity Fair, the sunny Delectable Mountains and the Shepherds, the Black River and the wonderful glory beyond it; and at last fallen asleep, to dream over the strange story, to hear the sweet welcomings of the sisters at the House Beautiful, and the song of birds from the window of that "upper chamber which opened toward the sunrising?" And who, looking back to the green spots in his childish experiences, does not bless the good Tinker of Elstow?

And who, that has reperused the story of the Pilgrim at a maturer age, and felt the plummet of its truth sounding in the deep places of the soul, has not reason to bless the author for some timely warning or grateful encouragement? Where is the scholar, the poet, the man of taste and feeling who does not with Cowper,

> "Even in transitory life's late day,
> Revere the man whose Pilgrim marks the road
> And guides the Progress of the soul to God!"

We have just been reading, with no slight degree of interest, that simple but wonderful piece of autobiography entitled "Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners," from the pen of the author of "Pilgrim's Progress." It is the record of a journey more terrible than that of the ideal Pilgrim; "truth stranger than fiction;" the painful upward struggling of a spirit from the blackness of despair and blasphemy, into the high, pure air of Hope and Faith. More earnest words were never written. It is the entire unveiling of a human heart, the tearing off of the fig-leaf covering of its sin. The voice which speaks to us from these old pages seems not so much that of a denizen of the world in which we live, as of a soul at the last solemn confessional. Shorn of all ornament, simple and direct as the contrition and prayer of childhood, when for the first time the Spectre of Sin stands by its bedside, the style is that of a man dead to self-gratification, careless of the world's opinion, and only desirous to convey to others, in all truthfulness and sincerity, the lesson of his inward trials, temptations, sins, weaknesses, and dangers; and to give glory to Him who had mercifully led him through all, and enabled him, like his own Pilgrim, to leave behind the Valley of the Shadow of Death, the snares of the Enchanted Ground, and the terrors of Doubting Castle, and to reach the land of Beulah, where the air was sweet and pleasant, and the birds sang and the flowers sprang up around him, and the Shining Ones walked in the brightness of the not distant heaven. In the introductory pages he says: "I could have dipped into a style higher than this in which I have discoursed, and could have adorned all things more than here I have seemed to do; but I dared not. God did not play in tempting me; neither did I play when I sunk, as it were, into a bottomless pit, when the pangs of hell took hold on me; wherefore, I may not play in relating of them, but be plain and simple, and lay down the thing as it was."

This book, as well as "Pilgrim's Progress," was written in Bedford prison, and was designed especially for the comfort and edification of his "children, whom God had counted him worthy to beget in faith by his ministry." In his introduction he tells them, that, although taken from them and tied up, "sticking, as it were, between the teeth of the lions of the wilderness," he once again, as before, from the top of Shemer and Hermon, so now, from the lion's den and the mountain of leopards, would look after them with fatherly care and desires for their everlasting welfare. "If," said he, "you have sinned against light; if you are tempted to blaspheme; if you are drowned in despair; if you think God fights against you, or if heaven is hidden from your eyes, remember it was so with your father. But out of all the Lord delivered me."

He gives no dates; he affords scarcely a clew to his localities; of the man, as he worked and ate and drank and lodged, of his neighbors and contemporaries, of all he saw and heard of the world about him, we have only an occasional glimpse, here and there, in his narrative. It is the story of his inward life only that he relates. What had time and place to do with one who trembled always with the awful consciousness of an immortal nature, and about whom fell alternately the shadows of hell and the splendors of heaven? We gather, indeed from his record that he was not an idle on-looker in the time of England's great struggle for freedom, but a soldier of the Parliament in his young years, among the praying sworders and psalm-singing pikemen, the Greathearts and Holdfasts whom he has immortalized in his allegory; but the only allusion which he makes to this portion of his experience is by way of illustration of the goodness of God in preserving him on occasions of peril.

He was born at Elstow, in Bedfordshire, in 1628; and, to use his own words, his "father's house was of that rank which is the meanest and most despised of all the families of the land." His father was a tinker, and the son followed the same calling, which necessarily brought him into association with the lowest and most depraved classes of English society. The estimation in which the tinker and his occupation were held in the seventeenth century, may be learned from the quaint and humorous description of Sir Thomas Overbury. "The tinker," saith he, "is a movable, for he hath no abiding in one place; he seems to be devout, for his life is a continual pilgrimage, and sometimes, in humility, goes barefoot, therein making necessity a virtue; he is a gallant, for he carries all his wealth upon his back; or a philosopher, for he bears all his substance with him. He is always furnished with a song, to which his hammer, keeping tune, proves that he was the first founder of the kettle-drum; where the best ale is, there stands his music most upon crotchets. The companion of his travel is some foul, sunburnt quean, that, since the terrible statute, has recanted gypsyism, and is turned pedlaress. So marches he all over England, with his bag and baggage; his conversation is irreprovable, for he is always mending. He observes truly the statutes, and therefore had rather steal than beg. He is so strong an enemy of idleness, that in mending one hole he would rather make three than want work; and when he hath done, he throws the wallet of his faults behind him. His tongue is very voluble, which, with canting, proves him a linguist. He is entertained in every place, yet enters no farther than the door, to avoid suspicion. To conclude, if he escape Tyburn and Banbury, he dies a beggar."

Truly, but a poor beginning for a pious life was the youth of John Bunyan. As might have been expected, he was a wild, reckless, swearing boy, as his father doubtless was before him. "It was my delight," says he, "to be taken captive by the devil. I had few equals, both for cursing and swearing, lying and blaspheming." Yet, in his ignorance and darkness, his powerful imagination early lent terror to the reproaches of conscience. He was scared, even in childhood, with dreams of hell and apparitions of devils. Troubled with fears of eternal fire and the malignant demons who fed it in the regions of despair, he says that he often wished either that there was no hell, or that he had been born a devil himself, that he might be a tormentor rather than one of the tormented.

At an early age he appears to have married. His wife was as poor as himself, for he tells us that they had not so much as a dish or spoon between them; but she brought with her two books on religious subjects, the reading of which seems to have had no slight degree of influence on his mind. He went to church regularly, adored the priest and all things pertaining to his office, being, as he says, "overrun with superstition." On one occasion a sermon was preached against the breach of the Sabbath by sports or labor, which struck him at the moment as especially designed for himself; but by the time he had finished his dinner he was prepared to "shake it out of his mind, and return to his sports and gaming."

One day, while standing in the street, cursing and blaspheming, he met with a reproof which startled him. The woman of the house in front of which the wicked young tinker was standing, herself, as he remarks, "a very loose, ungodly wretch," protested that his horrible profanity made her tremble; that he was the ungodliest fellow for swearing she had ever heard, and able to spoil all the youth of the town who came in his company. Struck by this wholly unexpected rebuke, he at once abandoned the practice of swearing; although previously he tells us that "he had never known how to speak, unless he put an oath before and another behind."

His account of his entering upon the solemn duties of a preacher of the gospel is at once curious and instructive. He deals honestly with himself, exposing all his various moods, weaknesses, doubts, and temptations. "I preached," he says, "what I felt; for the terrors of the law and the guilt of transgression lay heavy on my conscience. I have been as one sent to them from the dead. I went, myself in chains, to preach to them in chains, and carried that fire in my conscience which I persuaded them to beware of." At times, when he stood up to preach, blasphemies and evil doubts rushed into his mind, and he felt a strong desire to utter them aloud to his congregation; and at other seasons, when he was about to apply to the sinner some searching and fearful text of scripture, he was tempted to withhold it, on the ground that it condemned himself also; but, withstanding the suggestion of the tempter, to use his own simile, he bowed himself, like Samson, to condemn sin wherever he found it, though he brought guilt and condemnation upon himself thereby, choosing rather to die with the Philistines than to deny the truth.

Foreseeing the consequences of exposing himself to the operation of the penal laws by holding conventicles and preaching, he was deeply afflicted at the thought of the suffering and destitution to which his wife and children might be exposed by his death or imprisonment. Nothing can be more touching than his simple and earnest words on this point. They show how warm and deep were his human affections, and what a tender and loving heart he laid as a sacrifice on the altar of duty.

"I found myself a man compassed with infirmities; the parting with my wife and poor children hath often been to me in this place as the pulling the flesh from the bones; and also it brought to my mind the many hardships, miseries, and wants, that my poor family was like to meet with, should I be taken from them, especially my poor blind child, who lay nearer my heart than all beside. Oh, the thoughts of the hardships I thought my poor blind one might go under would break my heart to pieces. Poor child! thought I, what sorrow art thou like to have for thy portion in this world! thou must be beaten, must beg, suffer hunger, cold, nakedness, and a thousand calamities, though I cannot now endure the wind should blow upon thee. But yet, thought I, I must venture you all with God, though it goeth to the quick to leave you. Oh! I saw I was as a man who was pulling down his house upon the heads of his wife and children; yet I thought on those 'two milch kine that were to carry the ark of God into another country, and to leave their calves behind them.'

"But that which helped me in this temptation was divers considerations: the first was, the consideration of those two Scriptures, 'Leave thy fatherless children, I will preserve them alive; and let thy widows trust in me;' and again, 'The Lord said, Verily it shall go well with thy remnant; verily I will cause the enemy to entreat them well in the time of evil.'"

He was arrested in 1660, charged with "devilishly and perniciously abstaining from church," and of being "a common upholder of conventicles." At the Quarter Sessions, where his trial seems to have been conducted somewhat like that of Faithful at Vanity Fair, he was sentenced to perpetual banishment. This sentence, however, was never executed, but he was remanded to Bedford jail, where he lay a prisoner for twelve years.

Here, shut out from the world, with no other books than the Bible and Fox's "Martyrs," he penned that great work which has attained a wider and more stable popularity than any other book in the English tongue. It is alike the favorite of the nursery and the study. Many experienced Christians hold it only second to the Bible; the infidel himself would not willingly let it die. Men of all sects read it with delight, as in the main a truthful representation of the Christian pilgrimage, without indeed assenting to all the doctrines which the author puts in the mouth of his fighting sermonizer, Greatheart, or which may be deduced from some other portions of his allegory. A recollection of his fearful sufferings, from misapprehension of a single text in the Scriptures, relative to the question of election, we may suppose gave a milder tone to the theology of his Pilgrim than was altogether consistent with the Calvinism of the seventeenth century. "Religion," says Macaulay, "has scarcely ever worn a form so calm and soothing as in Bunyan's allegory." In composing it, he seems never to have altogether lost sight of the fact, that, in his life-and-death struggle with Satan for the blessed promise recorded by the Apostle of Love, the adversary was generally found on the Genevan side of the argument.

Little did the short-sighted persecutors of Bunyan dream, when they closed upon him the door of Bedford jail, that God would overrule their poor spite and envy to His own glory and the world-wide renown of their victim. In the solitude of his prison, the ideal forms of beauty and sublimity which had long flitted before him vaguely, like the vision of the Temanite, took shape and coloring; and he was endowed with power to reduce them to order, and arrange them in harmonious groupings. His powerful imagination, no longer self-tormenting, but under the direction of reason and grace, expanded his narrow cell into a vast theatre, lighted up for the display of its wonders.

Few who read Bunyan nowadays think of him as one of the brave old English confessors, whose steady and firm endurance of persecution baffled, and in the end overcame, the tyranny of the Established Church in the reign of Charles II. What Milton and Penn and Locke wrote in defence of liberty, Bunyan lived out and acted. He made no concessions to worldly rank. Dissolute lords and proud bishops he counted less than the humblest and poorest of his disciples at Bedford. When first arrested and thrown into prison, he supposed he should be called to suffer death for his faithful testimony to the truth; and his great fear was, that he should not meet his fate with the requisite firmness, and so dishonor the cause of his Master. And when dark clouds came over him, and he sought in vain for a sufficient evidence that in the event of his death it would be well with him, he girded up his soul with the reflection that, as he suffered for the word and way of God, he was engaged not to shrink one hair's breadth from it. "I will leap," he says, "off the ladder blindfold into eternity, sink or swim, come heaven, come hell. Lord Jesus, if thou wilt catch me, do; if not, I will venture in thy name!"

The English revolution of the seventeenth century, while it humbled the false and oppressive aristocracy of rank and title, was prodigal in the development of the real nobility of the mind and heart. Its history is bright with the footprints of men whose very names still stir the hearts of freemen, the world over, like a trumpet peal. Say what we may of its fanaticism, laugh as we may at its extravagant enjoyment of newly-acquired religious and civil liberty, who shall now venture to deny that it was the golden age of England? Who that regards freedom above slavery, will now sympathize with the outcry and lamentation of those interested in the continuance of the old order of things, against the prevalence of sects and schism, but who at the same time, as Milton shrewdly intimates, dreaded more the rending of their pontifical sleeves than the rending of the Church? Who shall now sneer at Puritanism, with the "Defence of Unlicensed Printing" before him? Who scoff at Quakerism over the "Journal" of George Fox? Who shall join with debauched lordlings and fat-witted prelates in ridicule of Anabaptist levellers and dippers, after rising from the perusal of "Pilgrim's Progress?" "There were giants in those days." And foremost amid that band of liberty-loving and God-fearing men,

> "The slandered Calvinists of Charles's time,
> Who fought, and won it, Freedom's holy fight,"

stands the subject of our sketch, the "Tinker of Elstow." Of his high merit as an author there is no longer any question. The *Edinburgh Review* expressed the common sentiment of the literary world, when it declared that the two great creative minds of the seventeenth century were those which produced "Paradise Lost" and the "Pilgrim's Progress."

DANIEL DEFOE*

By Clark Russell

(1661–1731)

Daniel Defoe, whose "Robinson Crusoe" remains, at the end of two centuries, the most popular work of fiction in a literature abounding in imaginative works of superlative excellence, was born in London in 1661. His father was plain Mr. Foe, a butcher, of St. Giles, Cripplegate. Though Defoe speaks gratefully and respectfully of his father, he implies here and there in his writings a pride of birth which probably did not induce him to talk freely of the parental calling. He must needs be of Norman extraction, and go back with the best of those whose family claims he sneers at; and that posterity might be in no doubt of the antiquity of his descent, he, at the age of about forty, changed the plain sturdy name of Foe into De Foe; but the accepted name is as it is spelt in this contribution.

His father wished to make a Dissenting teacher of him, and sent him to Morton's Academy, in Newington Green. Morton thoroughly grounded him in knowledge of a practical and useful sort; and Defoe claimed for his preceptor's system of education that the pupils became masters of the English tongue. But language is a genius. No teacher could make a writer of a boy who was without the talent of words. In after years Defoe appears to have picked up several tongues, as may be judged by his challenge to John Tutchin, to translate with him any Latin, French, or Italian author for twenty pounds each book; one sees his proficiency also in the character he gives of himself in a paper in *Applebee's Journal.* But at the very heart of the genius of Defoe lay the spirit of the tradesman. It burns like a farthing rushlight in the midst of a richly furnished room. Whoever wants to understand Defoe must study his mind by this light. He declined to fill a pulpit because, in the language of the shop, "it did not pay." Already, that is when he was about two-and-twenty years old, he was writing pamphlets on Protestantism, on Popular Liberties, and the like, and he also appears to have taken part in the Duke of Monmouth's rising.

In 1685 he opened a shop as a hosier in Freeman's Court, Cornhill. There is nothing memorable to record of him while he was in this line of trade, saving that in 1688, at the Revolution, he made haste to accentuate his adhesion to William III. by joining a company of volunteer horse, a royal regiment made up of the principal citizens of London; these men, gallantly mounted and richly

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accoutred, with Defoe in their midst and the Earl of Monmouth at their head, guarded the king and queen to a banquet at Whitehall. His prosperity as a hosier ended in 1692, in which year he fled to Bristol, a bankrupt, with debts, according to his own showing, amounting to seventeen thousand pounds. He did not, however, long lie in hiding. In recognition of his services as a pamphleteer, the post of accountant to the Commissioners of the Glass Duty was given to him. We then find him prospering again. He started a brick-making manufactory at Tilbury, and set up a coach and a pleasure-boat. His pen, moreover, was ceaselessly employed; the titles of the productions of a single month would more than fill the slender space allotted me. He fought for Non-conformity till 1698, then broke with the Dissenters because of their practice of occasional conformity, which, he pretends, disgusted him. His argument was, let a man be wholly a Dissenter, or wholly a Churchman. But don't let him go to chapel one Sunday and church the next. He can never be taken seriously, however, in these short flights any more than in his long novels. There is no consistency in his writings, because there is no conscience in his opinions. In his "The Shortest Way with the Dissenters," he faces about, and the man who was at war with Howe, the most eloquent of Non-conformist divines, second only to Jeremy Taylor in richness of thought and splendor of diction, is, on the merits of that piece of irony, accepted by posterity as the foremost champion of Dissent.

Defoe's loyalty to King William, however, must pass unquestioned. "The True Born Englishman" procured him the notice of the king, whose confidence he claims to have been honored with. His real character as a journalist and publicist grows quickly visible after the death of William III. His genius as a "trimmer" makes sheer irony of his most appealing and eloquent pieces. Swift says of himself that he wrote that reputation might stand him in the room of a title and coach and six; Defoe flourished his pen as a tradesman, for money. Swift claims to have been the greatest master of irony of his day, nay, to have invented that form of writing. But Defoe surely is his equal, and in "The Shortest Way" out and away his superior. The writer's gravity completely deceived the world. When it was known who was the author, the Dissenters were hardly less indignant than the High Churchmen. The satiric recommendations were indeed in the highest degree alarming. The Tory party had approved with complacency while they thought the piece a serious proposal. When they found out Defoe wrote it, they hunted him down and forced him to surrender himself. A hue-and-cry advertisement in the papers while he was a fugitive, survives as one of the best pen-and-ink sketches in the language: "He is a middle-aged, spare man, about forty years old, of a brown complexion and dark brown coloured hair. but wears a wig: a hooked nose, a sharp chin, gray eyes, and a large mole near his mouth." "The Shortest Way" was ordered to be burnt, and Defoe sentenced to pay a fine of 200 marks to Queen Anne, to stand three times in the pillory, to be imprisoned during the queen's pleasure, and to find sureties for his good behavior for seven years.

The genius of Eyre Crowe has given a wonderful life and color to this memorable incident. This dead thing seems charged with a very passion of vitality in the charming illustration that accompanies this sketch. It is impossible to recur to the degradation of one of Great Britain's finest geniuses, at the instance of men of no more importance to posterity than the worms which have eaten them up, without wrath and disgust. But he was popular, and the crowd used him handsomely. They pelted him with flowers and drank his health. Pope, in a famous line, speaks of the London Monument that, like a tall bully, lifts its head and lies, because of the inscription upon it that charged the Papists with causing the great fire. The malignant little hunchback, as malevolent as an ape for all his genius, could tell lies as great as any the chisel could grave, and unfortunately, infinitely more lasting. When he wrote: "Earless on high stands unabash'd Defoe," he knew he lied. Defoe did not lose his ears. He was pilloried simply, and for three days successively, stood in Cornhill, in Cheapside, and at Temple Bar, where our illustration exhibits him. He went to Newgate; the government dared not hinder him from writing, and it was while a prisoner that he heroically started "The Review," at first a weekly, and afterward a bi-weekly, issue. It was also in Newgate that he learnt much of those secrets of the prison-house which, translated into "Moll Flanders" and "Colonel Jack," are transcripts so exquisitely faithful that one knows not how to parallel them in art save by the paintings of Hogarth. He had a wife and six children at this time, and it is difficult to guess how he provided for them. His works at Tilbury were a failure: it may be supposed that his pen was his sole resource.

The Earl of Nottingham resigned office in 1704, and was succeeded by Robert Harley, afterward Earl of Oxford. Harley, who had a high sense of Defoe's genius, sent a messenger to the author lying in jail to inquire what he could do for him. This was in May, yet it does not seem that he was released until August. The government forthwith employed him. His career from this period, whether as a journalist, or whether as a government hireling employed on secret services, is, to say the least, dishonest. In short he was a needy man, willing to write for anybody and say anything for money. In 1706 he was sent as a spy to Scotland. Nothing was then talked about but the union of the two kingdoms; on both sides of the Tweed the masses of the people were crazy with the excitement of the subject. Of what value Defoe's services were, it is hard now to imagine. Professor Minto supposes that his business "was to ascertain and report the opinions of influential persons, and keep the government informed as far as he could of the general state of feeling." When Harley fell, Godolphin continued to employ Defoe as a government secret emissary and writer. He was again sent to Scotland in 1708, in relation to the suspected invasion of that country by the French; but he found time to keep his "Review" going. We see him "trimming" afresh, with masterly disregard to every appeal save that of his purse, when Godolphin surrendered the treasurer's staff, and Harley once more became prime minister. "My duty," says he, with that wonderful countenance of gravity, and that fine air of outraged honor, which express him in his political writings cer-

EYRE CROWE PINXIT.

DE FOE IN THE PILLORY.

tainly, as the very prince of humbugs, "was to go along with every ministry, so far as they did not break in upon the constitution and the laws and liberty of my country." At what price did he value the constitution? And how much, leaning across the counter of his literary calling, would he ask for the laws and liberties of his country? Both Godolphin and Harley, no doubt, exactly knew.

But enough in this brief sketch has been said of him as politician, journalist, controversialist, spy. He heaped pamphlet upon pamphlet, volume upon volume, and in July, 1715, was found guilty of what was called a scandalous libel against Lord Anglesea. Sentence was deferred, but he was never brought up for judgment. His representations of ardent devotion to the Whig interest seem to have procured his absolution. Be this as it may, it is extraordinary to reflect that he should live to be fifty-eight years of age before he could find it in him to produce that masterpiece of romance, "Robinson Crusoe," the delight, I may truly call it, of all reading nations. The fiction is based upon the experiences of Alexander Selkirk. He had read Steele's story of that man lonely in the South Sea island, and Woodes Roger's account of the discovery of him. Sir Walter Scott has pointed out that Defoe was known to the great circumnavigator Dampier, and he assumes with good reason that he drew many hints from the conversation and recollections of that fine seaman. He was a prosperous man when he wrote "Robinson Crusoe," had built a house at Stoke Newington, and drove in his own coach. This had come about through his successful connection with certain journals; he was also rapidly producing, and nearly all that he wrote sold handsomely. Almost as many fine things have been said about "Robinson Crusoe" as about Niagara Falls, or sunrise and sunset. The world has decided to consider it Defoe's masterpiece, and to neglect all else that he wrote for it. Nor can the world be blamed. The deliberate and dangerous lewdness of Defoe is one of the most deplorable things in letters. We shelve much of Smollett, much of Fielding, without great regret, but it is lamentable that works of powers and perceptions so supreme as "Moll Flanders" and "Colonel Jack" should be found unfit and unreadable, infinitely more perilous to the young than the coarser, but honester, freedoms of Smollett and Fielding, because of Defoe's base tradesmanlike trick of representing in colors as tempting as possible the sins which with formal, pulpitic, hypocritical gravity he entreats you to avoid. "Robinson Crusoe" is wholesome: one can see one's daughter with that book in her hand and feel easy. Yet it has not the strength nor the art of "Roxana," "Colonel Jack," and "Moll Flanders." In fact, it may be said that when Defoe set about to write this book he had no thoughts whatever of art in his head. He was to relate what happened to a castaway, and the skill shown is that of a sailor who writes up his log-book. No one could have been more astonished by the success of the book than Defoe himself. He afterward went to work to communicate a needless significance to the narrative, whose charm is its eternal grace of freshness and simplicity, by writing the "Serious Reflections of Robinson Crusoe," in which he would have us believe that Crusoe's story is an allegory based on Defoe's own life. This is accepted by some even in our own time. It is easy to understand that Defoe should lose no opportunity to recommend his works by every species of advertisement; no man could lie in a literary sense with more self-complacency, and a clearer conception of the business value of the falsehood; but it is wonderful to find people choosing to travesty the palpably obvious, sooner than accept the plain truth as it lies naked on the face of the printed page.

But if Defoe had never written a line of "Robinson Crusoe," we should know him to be a great genius and a fine artist by the opening pages of "Colonel Jack." All about the lives of the three boys, their sleeping in glass houses, their picking of pockets, the loss of the money in the hollow tree, and then the recovery of it, is in its kind matchless in fiction. Wonderfully fine too are many of the touches in "Moll Flanders": the whole story of her descent from the honesty of a simple serving-maid to the horrors of Newgate and transportation, is so masterful, the art is so consummate, the impersonation by Defoe of the character of a subtle trollop full of roguish moralizings and thin sentimentalities, is so extraordinary, that one can never cease to deplore that, not the subject of the book, but Defoe's indecent handling of it, should compel the world virtually to taboo it. "Roxana" is also on the condemned list for the same reason. But literature could sooner spare this book than the other two. It was completed by another hand, and Defoe's own share might have very well been the work of the person who wrote the sequel.

Another masterpiece is his "History of the Plague." This shows his imagination at its highest, and it is not impossible but that its composition may have cost him more trouble than "Robinson Crusoe" itself. There is no space left to deal with his other works. Reference can only be made to "Captain Singleton," "A System of Magic," "A History of the Devil," "The Family Instructor," "The Plan of English Commerce," "A New Voyage Round the World," etc. In naming these I abbreviate the titles. Most of Defoe's title-pages epitomize his works, and merely as a list would fill a stout volume.

It has been suggested that Defoe in his old age became insane, and hid himself from his family for no discoverable reasons. It is certain that in September, 1729, he mysteriously removed from his house, and went into hiding in the neighborhood of Greenwich. From his secret retreat he addressed letters to his son-in-law Baker, complaining of his having been inhumanly ill-used by someone whom Mr. Lee, one of his biographers, conjectures was Mist, the proprietor of *Mist's Journal*, with whom Defoe had been associated in business. Other biographers seem to think that Defoe was merely hiding from the pursuit of his creditors, and dodging in his old dexterous manner the obligation of making over property to his daughter Hannah, who was married to Baker. For two years he was homeless and fugitive; it is not asserted, however, that he was in actual distress at the time of his death. He died in a lodging in a then respectable neighborhood called Ropemaker's Alley, Moor Fields, April 26, 1731, in his seventieth year.

W. Clark Russell

DEAN SWIFT

By Samuel Archer

(1667–1745)

Jonathan Swift's father died before the boy was born, and the care of his education was kindly undertaken by Mr. Godwin Swift, his uncle, a very eminent attorney at Dublin, who likewise took his mother and his sister under his protection, and thus became a guardian to the family. When his nephew was six years of age he sent him to school at Kilkenny, and about eight years afterward he entered him a student of Trinity College in Dublin, where Swift lived in perfect regularity and in an entire obedience to the statutes; but the moroseness of his temper often rendered him unacceptable to his companions, so that he was little regarded and less beloved; nor were the academical exercises agreeable to his genius.

He held logic and metaphysics in the utmost contempt, and he scarcely attended at all to mathematics and natural philosophy, unless to turn them into ridicule. The studies which he chiefly followed were history and poetry, in which he made great progress; but to other branches of science he had given so very little application, that when he appeared as a candidate for the degree of bachelor of arts, after having studied four years, he was set aside on account of insufficiency, and at last obtained his admission *speciali gratiâ*, a phrase which in that university carries with it the utmost marks of reproach. Swift was fired with indignation at the treatment he had received in Ireland, and therefore resolved to pursue his studies at Oxford. However, that he might be admitted *ad eundem*, he was obliged to carry with him a testimonial of his degree. The expression *speciali gratiâ* is so peculiar to the university of Dublin, that when Mr. Swift exhibited his testimonial at Oxford, the members of the English university concluded that the words *speciali gratiâ* must signify a degree conferred in reward of some extraordinary diligence and learning. He was immediately admitted *ad eundem*, and entered himself at Hart Hall, now Hartford College, where he constantly resided (some visits to his mother, at Leicester, and to Sir William Temple, at Moose Park, excepted) till he took his degree of master of arts, which was in the year 1691. And in order to recover his lost time he now studied eight hours daily for seven years.

Swift, as soon as he had quitted the University of Oxford, lived with Sir William Temple as his friend and domestic companion. When he had been about two years with Sir William, he contracted a very long and dangerous illness by eating an immoderate quantity of fruit. To this surfeit he was often heard to ascribe that giddiness in his head which, with intermissions sometimes of longer and sometimes of shorter continuance, pursued him to the end of his life.

In compliance with the advice of physicians, when he was sufficiently recovered to travel, he went to Ireland, to try the effects of his native air; but finding the greatest benefit arose from the exercise of travelling, he followed his own inclination. He soon returned into England, and was again received in a most affectionate manner by Sir William Temple, who was then settled at Shene, where he was often visited by King William.

Here Swift had frequent conversations with that prince, in some of which the king offered to make him a captain of horse, which offer, in splenetic dispositions, he always seemed sorry to have refused; but at the time he had resolved within his own mind to take orders; and during his whole life his resolutions, when once fixed, were ever after immovable.

About this time he assisted Sir William Temple in revising his works. He likewise corrected and improved his own "Tale of a Tub," a sketch of which he had drawn up while he was a student at Trinity College, Dublin. Sir William's conversation naturally turned upon political subjects, and Swift improved the frequent opportunities he had of acquiring from this able statesman a competent knowledge of public affairs. But at length he suspected that Sir William neglected to provide for him, merely that he might keep him in his family; and he resented this so very warmly that a quarrel ensued, and they parted in the year 1694, and he went to Ireland, where he took orders.

Sir William, however, notwithstanding the differences between them, recommended him in the strongest terms to Lord Capel, then lord-deputy, who gave him a prebend, of which the income was about £100 a year. Swift soon grew weary of his preferment: it was not sufficiently considerable, and was at so great a distance from the metropolis that it absolutely deprived him of that conversation and society in which he delighted. He had been used to different scenes in England, and had naturally an aversion to solitude and retirement. He was glad, therefore, to resign his prebend in favor of a friend, and to return to Shene, to Sir William Temple, who was so much pleased with his return, which he considered as an act of kindness to him in the close of life, that a sincere reconciliation took place, and they lived together in perfect harmony till the death of Sir William. By his will he left him a considerable legacy in money, and the care, trust, and emolument of publishing his posthumous works. During Swift's residence at Shene he became intimately acquainted with Miss Johnson, who was the daughter of Sir William's steward, and who was afterward so distinguished and so much celebrated in Swift's works under the name of Stella.

Soon after the death of his patron, Swift came to London, and took the earliest opportunity of transmitting a memorial to King William, under the claim of a promise made by his majesty to Sir William Temple, "that Mr. Swift should have the first vacancy that happened among the prebends of Westminster or Canterbury." The memorial had no effect; and, indeed, Swift himself afterward declared that he believed the king never received it. After a long and fruitless attendance at White Hall, Mr. Swift reluctantly gave up all thoughts of a settlement in England. In the year 1701 he took his doctor's degree; and toward the latter end of that year King William died.

On the accession of Queen Anne, Dr. Swift came to England. It cannot be denied that the chief ministers of the queen, whether distinguished under the titles of Whigs or Tories, of high-church or of low-church, were from the beginning to the end of her reign encouragers of learning and patrons of learned men. The wits of that era were numerous and eminent. Amid the crowd, yet superior to the rest, appeared Dr. Swift. In a mixture of those two jarring parties called Whig and Tory, consisted the first ministry of Queen Anne; but the greater share of the administration was committed to the Whigs, who soon engrossed the whole. The queen, whose heart was naturally inclined toward the Tories, remained an unwilling prisoner several years to the Whigs, till Mr. Harley at length took her majesty out of their hands, and during the remainder of her life surrounded her with a set of Tories, under the conduct of the Duke of Ormond and himself.

Dr. Swift was known to the great men of each denomination. It is certain that he was bred up and educated with Whigs, at least with such as may be found ranged under the title. His motives for quitting Whigism for Toryism appear throughout his works. He had commenced as a political author in 1701, when he published "A Discourse on the Contests and Dissensions between the Nobles and Commons in Athens and Rome, with the Consequences they had upon both States." This was written in defence of King William and his ministers against the violent proceedings in the House of Commons. But from this time to the year 1708, Lord Orrery informs us, he did not write any political pamphlet. From this year to 1710 he worked hard to undermine the Whigs and to open a way for the Tories to come into power. His intimacy with Harley commenced, as may be deduced from his works, in October, 1710. It seems undeniable that a settlement in England was the constant object of Dr. Swift's ambition; so that his promotion to a deanery in Ireland was rather a disappointment than a reward, as appears by many expressions in his letters to Mr. Gay and Mr. Pope.

The business which first introduced him to Harley was a commission sent to him by the primate of Ireland to solicit the queen to release the clergy of that kingdom from the twentieth-penny and first-fruits. As soon as he received the primate's instructions, he resolved to wait on Harley; but before the first interview he took care to get himself represented as a person who had been ill used by the last ministry, because he would not go such lengths as they would have had him. The new minister received him with open arms, soon after accomplished his business, bade him come often to see him privately, and told him that he must bring him to the knowledge of Mr. St. John (Lord Bolingbroke). Swift presently became acquainted with the rest of the ministry, who appear to have courted and caressed him with uncommon assiduity.

From this era to the death of Queen Anne we find him fighting on the side of the ministers and maintaining their cause in pamphlets, poems, and weekly papers. But notwithstanding his services to the ministry, he remained without preferment till the year 1713, when he was made Dean of St. Patrick's. In point of power and revenue such a deanery might appear no inconsiderable promotion; but to an ambitious mind whose perpetual aim was a settlement in England, a dignity in any other kingdom must appear only an honorable and profitable banishment. There is great reason to imagine that the temper of Swift might occasion his English friends to wish him happily and properly promoted at a distance. His spirit was ever untractable, the motions of his genius irregular. He assumed more the airs of a patron than a friend. He affected rather to dictate than advise, and was elated with the appearance of enjoying ministerial confidence.

Dr. Swift had little reason to rejoice in the land where his lot had fallen; for upon his arrival in Ireland to take possession of his deanery, he found the violence of party reigning in that kingdom to the highest degree. The common people were taught to look upon him as a Jacobite, and they proceeded so far in their detestation as to throw stones at him as he passed through the streets. The chapter of St. Patrick's, like the rest of the kingdom, received him with great reluctance. They thwarted him in every particular he proposed. He was avoided as a pestilence, opposed as an invader, and marked out as an enemy to his country. Such was his first reception as Dean of St. Patrick's. Fewer talents and less firmness must have yielded to such violent opposition. But so strange are the revolutions of this world that Dean Swift, who was then the detestation of the Irish rabble, lived to govern them with absolute sway.

He made no longer stay in Ireland than was requisite to establish himself a dean, and in the beginning of the year 1714, returned to England. He found his great friends at the helm much disunited among themselves. He saw the queen declining in health and distressed in situation. The part which he had to act upon this occasion was not so difficult as it was disagreeable; he exerted all his skill to reunite the ministers. Finding his endeavors fruitless, he retired to a friend's house in Berkshire, where he remained till the queen's death, an event which fixed the period of his views in England and made him return as fast as possible to his deanery in Ireland, oppressed with grief and discontent.

His works from the year 1714 to the year 1720 are few in number and of small importance. "Poems to Stella" and "Trifles to Dr. Sheridan" fill up a great part of that period. But during this interval, Lord Orrery supposes, he employed his time in writing "Gulliver's Travels." His mind was likewise fully occupied by an affecting private incident. In 1713 he had formed an intimacy with a young lady in London, to whom he became a kind of preceptor; her real name was Vanhomrigh, and she was the daughter of a Dutch merchant who settled and died at Dublin. This lady was a great admirer of reading, and had a taste for poetry This increased her regard for Swift till it grew to affection, and she made him an offer of marriage, which he refused, and upon this occasion he wrote his little poem of "Cadenus and Vanessa." The young lady from this time was called Vanessa; and her mother dying in 1714, she and her sister followed the dean to Ireland, where he frequently visited them; and he kept up a literary correspondence with Vanessa until her death, which followed closely on a bitter quarrel with him.

In the year 1720 he began to reassume the character of a political writer. A small pamphlet, in defence of the Irish manufactories, was supposed to be his first essay, in Ireland, in that kind of writing; and to that pamphlet he owed the turn of the popular tide in his favor. The pamphlet recommended the universal use of the Irish manufactures within the kingdom. Some little pieces of poetry to the same purpose were no less acceptable and engaging; nor was the dean's attachment to the true interest of Ireland any longer doubted. His patriotism was as manifest as his wit; he was looked upon with pleasure and respect as he passed through the streets, and had attained to so high a degree of popularity as to become the arbitrator in disputes among his neighbors.

But the popular affection which the dean had hitherto acquired, may be said not to have been universal until the publication of the Drapier's Letters, in 1724, which made all ranks and professions universal in his applause. These letters were occasioned by a patent having been obtained by one William Wood, to coin £180,000 of halfpence for the use of Ireland. The dean, in character of a draper, wrote a series of letters to the people, urging them not to receive this money; and Wood, though powerfully supported, was compelled to withdraw his patent, and his money was totally suppressed. Never was any name bestowed with more universal approbation than the name of the Drapier was bestowed upon the dean, who had no sooner assumed it than he became the idol of Ireland, even to a degree of devotion; and bumpers were poured forth to the Drapier, as large and as frequent as to the glorious and immortal memory of King William III. Acclamations and vows for his prosperity attended him wherever he went, and his portrait was painted in every street in Dublin.

The dean was consulted in all points relating to domestic policy in general, and to the trade of Ireland in particular; but he was more immediately looked on as the legislator of the weavers, who frequently came to him in a body to receive his advice in settling the rates of their manufactures, and the wages of their journeymen. When elections were pending for the city of Dublin, many of the companies refused to declare themselves till they had consulted his sentiments and inclinations.

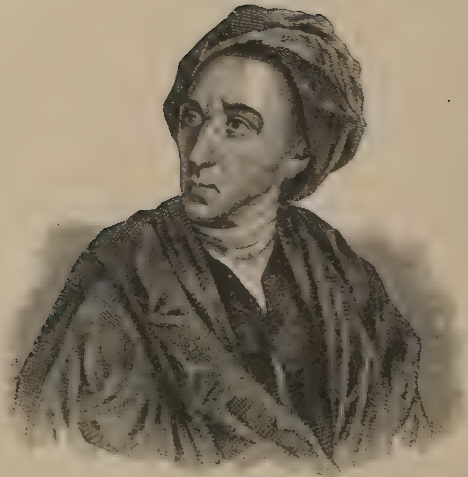
In 1727 died his beloved Stella, in the forty-fourth year of her age, regretted by the dean with such excess of sorrow as only the keenest sensibility could feel, and the most excellent character excite. After the death of Stella his life became very retired, and the austerity of his temper increased; his public days for receiving company were discontinued, and he even shunned the society of his most intimate friends.

We have now conducted the dean through the most interesting circumstances of his life, to the fatal period wherein he was utterly deprived of his reason, a loss which he often seemed to foresee, and prophetically lamented to his friends. The total deprivation of his senses came upon him by degrees. In the year 1736 he was seized with a violent fit of giddiness: he was at that time writing a satirical poem, called the "Legion Club;" but he found the effects of his giddiness so dreadful that he left the poem unfinished, and never afterward attempted a composition of any length, either in verse or prose. However, his conversation still remained the same, lively and severe; but his memory gradually grew worse and worse, and as that decreased he grew every day more fretful and impatient. From the year 1739 to the year 1744 his passions grew so violent and ungovernable, his memory so decayed, and his reason so depraved, that the utmost precautions were taken to prevent all strangers from approaching him, for till then he had not appeared totally incapable of conversation. He now, however, grew rapidly worse, and died in 1745. He had willed all his fortune to be used in founding a home for incurable madmen.

ALEXANDER POPE*

By Austin Dobson

(1688–1744)



More than two hundred years ago, on May 21, 1688, was born in Lombard Street, London, a poet whose influence, for nearly a century, reigned paramount in English verse. He had not been long dead, it is true, when his supremacy was contested, but to so little purpose that two decades passed away before his overbold assailant mustered courage to follow up his first attack. Then, after an interval, the challenge was renewed, and for a long period the literary world rang with the blows of the opposing champions. Was Alexander Pope a great poet or was he not? It was Thomas Warton who first put that question, and it was William Bowles who repeated it. Against Warton was Warburton; against Bowles were Byron and Campbell and Roscoe, with a host of minor combatants. When at last the contest seemed to droop it was only to begin again upon a new issue; and the lists shook beneath the inroad of De Quincey and Macaulay. Was Pope a "correct" poet? The latter-

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day reader, turning cautiously—it may be languidly—the records of that ancient controversy, wonders a little at the dust and hubbub. If he trusts to his first impression, he will, in all probability, be content to waive discussion by claiming for Pope a considerably lower place than for Shakespeare or for Milton; and upon the point of his "correctness" will decide discreetly, in the spirit of the immortal Captain Bunsby, that much depends upon the precise application of the term. But let him have a care. The debate is an endless one, eternally seductive, irrepressibly renascent, and hopelessly bound up with the ineradicable oppositions of human nature. Sooner or later he will be drawn into the conflict and cry his slogan with the rest. If, in the ensuing pages, their writer seems to shun that time-honored discussion, as well as some other notable difficulties of Pope's biography, he does so mainly lest they should, in Bunyan's homespun phrase,

> "—prove *ad infinitum* and eat out
> The thing that he already is about,"

to wit, the recalling of Pope's work and story.

Pope's father was a London linen-merchant, who, according to Spence, "dealt in Hollands wholesale." His mother was of good extraction, being the daughter of one William Turner, of York. Both were Roman Catholics, at a time when to be of that faith in England was to suffer many social disabilities; and it was perhaps in consequence of these that, about the time of the Revolution, the elder Pope bought a small house at Binfield, on the skirts of Windsor Forest. Here he lived upon his means and cultivated his garden, a taste which he transmitted to his son, who, under the care of his mother and a nurse named Mary Beach, grew from a sickly infant into a frail, large-eyed boy with a sweet voice, an eager, precocious temperament, and an inordinate love of books, from copying the type of which he first learned to write. Like his father, he was slightly deformed, while from his mother he derived a life-long tendency to headache. His early education was of a most miscellaneous character. After some tuition from the family priest, he passed to a school at Twyford, where he is said to have been flogged for lampooning the master. Thence he went to a second school, where he learned but little. As a boy, however, he had tried his hand at translating, and had tacked together, from reminiscences of Ogilby, a kind of Homeric drama to be acted by his playmates, with the gardener for Ajax. But his real education began at Binfield, where, when between twelve and thirteen, he resolutely sat down to teach himself Latin, French, and Greek. Between twelve and twenty he must have read enormously and written as indefatigably. Among other things, he composed an epic of Alcander, Prince of Rhodes, which is said to have extended to four thousand lines, and its versification was so finished that he used some of the couplets long afterward for maturer work. His earliest critic was his father, who would sit in judgment on his son's performances, ruthlessly "sending him down" when the Muse proved unusually stubborn "These be good rhymes," he would say when he was pleased.

The quiet, orderly household in Windsor Forest received but few visitors, and those chiefly of the family faith. Such, for example, were the Carylls of West Grinstead, and the Blounts of Mapledurham, where there were two bright-eyed daughters of Pope's own age, the "fair-hair'd Martha and Teresa brown," whose names, linked in Gay's dancing verse, were afterward to be indissolubly connected with that of their Binfield neighbor. At this date, however, they must have been school-girls at Hammersmith, under some pre-Thackerayan Miss Pinkerton, or else were being "finished" at that Paris establishment whence they derived the foreign *cachet* which is said to have been part of their charm. Another friend was the ex-statesman and ambassador, Sir William Trumbull of East Hampstead, who compared artichokes with the father and read poetry with the son. To Trumbull Pope submitted some of his earliest verses, and from him, it seems, received much valuable advice, including a recommendation to translate Homer Another acquaintance was the minor poet and criticaster, William Walsh, who gave his young friend that memorable (and somewhat ambiguous) injunction to "study the ancients" and "be correct." He had been introduced to Walsh by another man of letters, whose acquaintance he must have made during one of his brief excursions to London, the whilom dramatist Wycherley—now a broken septuagenarian, but still retaining a sort of bankrupt *bel air*. To Wycherley, who could not tear himself from his favorite St. James's, the youthful Pope wrote literary letters, being even decoyed into patching and revising the old beau's senile verses. Another of his correspondents was Henry Cromwell—Gay's "honest, hatless Cromwell, with red breeches," who at this time was playing the part of an elderly Phaon to the Sappho of a third-rate poetess, Mrs. Elizabeth Thomas. The epistles of the boy at Binfield to these battered men about town, when not discussing metres and the precepts of M. the Abbé Bossu, in a style modelled upon Balzac and Voiture, are sometimes sorry reading. But both Wycherley and Cromwell were wits and men of education, and it is not difficult to pardon that morbid, over-active mind for occasional vagrancy in its efforts after some congenial escape from the Tory fox-hunters of Berkshire and the ribald drinking songs of Durfey.

By 1711, when Pope was three-and-twenty, his intercourse with Wycherley and Cromwell had practically ceased, and "knowing Walsh" was dead. But he had already obtained a hearing as a poet. He had written a series of "Pastorals" in the reigning taste, a taste which, under guise of imitating Theocritus and Virgil, not only transferred to our bleaker shores the fauna and flora of Italy and Greece, but brought along with them the light-clad (and somewhat embarrassed) Delias and Sylvias of those sunnier lands. Pope, indeed, partly modified this. He drew the line at wolves, for instance, though (as Mr. Leslie Stephen suggests) this mattered little when altars and milk-white sacrificial bulls were still "perpetually retained." But the main feature of the "Pastorals" was less their subject than their versification, which in these earliest efforts was already as finished and as artful as anything Pope ever wrote, and was far above the work of his contemporaries. Lansdowne ("Granville the polite"), Congreve, Garth, Halifax, and others praised them warmly in MS., and left-legged Jacob Tonson came cap in hand to solicit them for the sixth part of his "Miscellany," where they ultimately wound up that volume, balancing (or rather over-balancing) the "Pastorals" of Ambrose Philips, which began it. To the same collection Pope contributed an imitation of Chaucer, and an episode from the "Iliad." The immediate success of these performances seems to have set him upon his next poem, the "Essay on Criticism," which was published by Lewis in 1711. His mastery over his medium was still more noticeable than the originality of his thought. But this *cento* of exquisitely chiselled critical commonplaces goes far toward being a *chef d'œuvre* of mere manipulative skill; and we are still, by our daily use of some of its lines, justifying the truth of Addison's dictum, that "Wit and fine Writing doth not consist so much in advancing Things that are new as in giving Things that are known an agreeable Turn."

To the "Essay on Criticism" succeeded one of Pope's most brilliant poems, the famous "Rape of the Lock." In its first form it appeared, together with some minor poems and translations, in a volume of "Miscellanies" published by Tonson's rival, Lintot. Its *motif* was the theft by a certain Lord Petre of one of the tresses of Miss Arabella or "Belle" Fermor, and this venial larceny having somewhat strained the relations of the two families concerned, Pope was invited to compose matters by invocation of the Muse. The poem in its first "Miscellany" form consisted of no more than two cantos; but Pope, confident of his powers, and certainly with a better knowledge of his own method than his critics could have possessed, boldly took advantage of its success to expand it into five cantos by the addition of a Rosicrucian machinery of sylphs and gnomes. This apparently hazardous experiment was perfectly successful, and the "Rape of the Lock" became what it remains, the typical example of raillery in English verse—the solitary specimen of sustained and airy grace. If it has faults, they are the faults of the time, and not of the poem, the execution of which is a marvel of ease, good humor, and delicate irony. Another of Pope's efforts at this date was "Windsor Forest," a theme which, assuming that to be the best which lies nearest, should have afforded material for another enduring success. But Pope, with a matchless eye for manners, looked at nature with the unpurged vision of his generation, and the poem, though not without dignity and beauty of versification, is, to the modern reader, cold and conventional.

To the reader under Anne it was otherwise, for to him "verdant isles" and "waving groves" and the whole farrago of gradus epithets were not only grateful but indispensable. "Mr. Pope," wrote Swift to Stella under date of March, 1713, "has published a fine poem called 'Windsor Forest.' Read it." This is the only time Pope is mentioned in that memorable journal (now nearing its closing pages) and it scarcely points to any close relations. But, by and by, when Swift came back from his Irish deanery to reconcile Oxford and Bolingbroke, he seems to have made Pope's personal acquaintance, and to have begun the correspondence which lasted so long. By Swift, Pope was introduced to Oxford, to his later "guide, philosopher, and friend," Bolingbroke, to the gentle and humane Atterbury, Bishop of Rochester, to Prior and Parnell, to Arbuthnot, best of men and physicians—some of whom he mentions in the "Prologue to the Satires." Swift, he says:

> "endur'd my lays;
> The courtly Talbot, Somers, Sheffield read;
> Ev'n mitred *Rochester* would nod the head,
> And *St. John's* self (great Dryden's friends before)
> With open arms receiv'd one Poet more."

Closely connected with the group of Pope's connections at this time was the famous literary association known as the "Scriblerus Club," the avowed object of which was to satirize the abuses of human learning. The dispersal of its members at the death of Anne interrupted this enterprise, which never extended beyond a first book—a fragment which must, however, be held to have been unusually pregnant in suggestion, since it contained the germs of "Gulliver's Travels" and the "Dunciad." But Pope's life at this point grows too complicated to be pursued in detail, and it will be impossible henceforth to do more than note briefly its chief incidents. Trumbull's counsel to him to translate Homer, and his first essay in Tonson's "Miscellany," have already been mentioned. In a later volume of "Miscellany" poems edited by Steele, he had printed some specimens from the "Odyssey," and in the following year he embarked in the great work of his middle life, the translation of the "Iliad." By 1715 the first volume, containing four books, was issued to the subscribers, whose roll, ennobled by the patronage of Oxford and Bolingbroke, and extended by the imperious advocacy of Swift, included almost everyone of importance. The only blot upon its brilliant success is the unfortunate quarrel with Addison, which led to the portrait of Atticus.

Early in 1716, not long after the death of Wycherley, Pope moved from Binfield to Chiswick. His house, in what was then known as the "New Buildings," but is now Mawson's Row, still exists down a turning off the Mall, not very far from the old Church where Hogarth lies buried, and from Chiswick House, the mansion of Lord Burlington, under whose wing Pope describes himself as residing. Here, for a couple of years, were delivered those letters, upon whose backs or envelopes, piously preserved in the British Museum, the "paper-sparing" poet penned his daily tale of Homeric translation, completing two more volumes of the "Iliad" during his sojourn in Mawson's Row. At this time he was twenty-eight, and may therefore be assumed to be accurately represented in the portrait painted by Kneller in 1716, and mezzotinted a year later by Smith. Here he appears as a slight, delicate young man, wearing a close-fitting vest or tunic, and, in lieu of a wig, the dressing or "night-cap" which took its place. His keen, shaven face is already worn by work and ill-health, and conspicuous for the large and brilliant eyes to which he refers, in his "Epistle to Arbuthnot," as one of his noticeable features.

Besides the poems already mentioned, he had, in 1715, produced another imitation of Chaucer, the "Temple of Fame," an effort which has never taken high rank among his works. But while at Chiswick he published, in addition to instalments of the "Iliad," two pieces of considerable merit, although they are scarcely regarded by the critics of this age with the enthusiasm they excited in Pope's earliest admirers. One is the celebrated "Elegy to the Memory of an Unfortunate Lady," which perhaps owes some of its reputation to the difficulty experienced in identifying the "ever injur'd Shade" intended. She is now understood to have been a much-persecuted Mrs. Weston, who, although she suffered many griefs, did not (as her poet implies) put an end to her own life in consequence. The other, under the title of "Eloisa to Abelard," versifies the Latin letters of that distinguished amorist to her lover. It is impossible to deny to both these works the utmost amount of artful development and verbal finish. All that skill can do in the simulation of sincerity Pope has done. "The Epistle of Eloisa," he tells a correspondent, "grows warm, and begins to have some breathings of the heart in it, which may make posterity think I was in love." With all submission, this is precisely the illusion which is absent, and it is perfectly possible for the most sympathetic reader to peruse the balanced outpourings of "Fulbert's niece" without the slightest tendency to that *globus hystericus* which all persons of sensibility must desire to experience. Yet it must nevertheless be admitted that these poems are the best examples of a vein which is not native to their writer, and that, in them, Pope comes nearer to genuine pathos than in any other of his works. Next to these, the only literary event of this portion of his career is his connection with the deplorable "Three Hours after Marriage," a farce in which he was assisted by Arbuthnot and Gay, the latter of whom bore the blame of the play's failure. Pope's old enemy Dennis, was caricatured in it as Sir Tremendous; but it had also the effect of adding another and abler foe to the list of his opponents, the player and manager, Colley Cibber, whose open ridicule of a part of this ill-judged *jeu d'esprit* began the feud which ultimately secured for him the supreme honors of the "Dunciad."

But although Pope's militant nature never feared to make an enemy, his friends were still in the majority. His "Homer," with its magnificent subscription list, had opened a wider world to him; and his new associates seem for the time to have partially seduced him from his valetudinarian régime and ten hours daily study. In his varied and alembicated correspondence we track him here and there, at Oxford or at Bath, studying architecture with my Lord Burlington and gardening with my Lord Bathurst or "beating the rounds" (probably only in metaphor) with wilder wits such as my Lord of Warwick and Holland. One of the prettiest of Pope's missives (some of them are not pretty) to "Mademoiselles de Maple-Durham," as he styles the Blounts, describes a visit he had paid to Queen Caroline's maids of honor at Hampton Court, the Bellenden and Lepel of his minor verses. He dilates upon their monotonous life of hunting, etiquette, and Westphalia ham, and then, not (as Carruthers suggests) without oblique intention of lighting a spark of jealousy in the fair Martha's bosom, records how he walked for three or four mortal hours by moonlight with Mrs

Lepel, meeting never a creature of quality but his Majesty King George I., giving audience to his Vice Chamberlain "all alone under the garden wall." Another epistolary idyl to Martha Blount, of which there are at least four replicas, relates the sentimental death by lightning of the two haymakers at Stanton Harcourt. Did Pope write this letter? or did Gay? Or did they write it both together? This is a question which Pope's editors have failed to settle. At all events, a similar composition went to another of Pope's flames, the brilliant Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, now absent from England with her husband, who was ambassador at Constantinople. Clever Lady Mary, however, entirely declined to be subjugated by the pathetic fallacy, and sent back a matter-of-fact epitaph for John Hewet and Sarah Drew, which, though it wound up with a compliment to her correspondent, can hardly have gratified him. But there is one letter of this time the sincerity of which is undoubted. It is Pope's announcement to Martha Blount of his father's death. "My poor Father dyed last night," it says. "Believe, since I don't forget you this moment, I never shall. A. Pope." The antithetical touch shows how art had become a second nature with the writer; but his attachment and devotion to his parents is not one of the disputed points in his story.

Alexander Pope the elder died in October, 1717. Not very long after, the poet moved with his mother to a little villa, or "villakin" as Swift called it, on the banks of the Thames at Twickenham, close to the grotesque Gothic jumble known as Radnor House. At Twickenham or, as he called it, "Twitnam," Pope continued to reside until his death, his permanent house-mates being his old nurse, Mary Beach, to whom there is a tablet on the outer wall of Twickenham Church, and his mother, who survived her husband until 1733, only preceding her famous son by eleven years. Pope tended her with exemplary care—a care rendered daily more imperative by her increasing infirmities. Many references to her occur in his correspondence, and the sedulous inquiries made by his friends as to her health are earnest of her son's unwearied solicitude. One or two of the old lady's simple, homely letters to him have been preserved, with their fond messages and faulty spelling. Now and then, it is recorded, he would gratify her by setting her to transcribe his "Homer," an assistance of which the advantages must have been debatable.

Many friends came and went at the pleasant little villa by the Thames, "flanked by its two Courts" of Hampton and Kew, and often, no doubt, the London stage, starting from the Chequers in Piccadilly, brought to it guests bearing names familiar in the annals of the time. There are three of his intimates who cannot be neglected in any record, however brief. When Lady Mary came back to England she took up her residence at Twickenham, and the hitherto epistolary adoration of the poet became a practical fact. According to a story popularized by the pencil of Frith, Pope at length so far forgot himself as to make a declaration in form, to which she returned no reply but that most exasperating of all replies, ungovernable laughter. Whether this tradition be true or not, it is plain that she seems always to have remembered their difference of rank, and to have been rather cold than encouraging. The issue of the acquaintance is a sorry one. Pope revenged himself for her scorn in his worst and most unmanly fashion of innuendo; she, on her side, retorted with lampoons and satire as cruel. One feels glad that she finally left England and that further bickering was impossible. The other two persons were the already mentioned Blounts, each of whom seems at first to have by turn

> "—blossomed in the light
> Of tender personal regards;"

Teresa, the elder and handsomer, becoming by degrees the acknowledged favorite. But whether, like the lover in Prior's song, Pope "convey'd his treasure in a borrowed name," or merely changed his mind, it is certain that, at a later period, the younger, Martha, had proved the "real flame," to the permanent displacement of her sister. As time went on, Pope's attachment for Martha Blount continued to increase until she became almost an inmate of his house. For more than fifteen years, he told Gay in 1730, he had spent three or four hours a day in her company; and he seems to have loved her with an affection as genuine and as watchful as that which he showed to his parents. Like all his connections, this, too, was marred by strange pettinesses and curious contradictions; but one can scarcely grudge to his sickly sensitive nature the anodyne of feminine sympathy. Why so close and tender a friendship never ripened into marriage is an inquiry that may be consigned to the limbo of questions insoluble. It is enough that in the checkered chronicle of the loves of the poets, "blue-eyed Patty Blount" has an immortality almost as secure as that of Esther Johnson.

To return to Pope's works. In the first years of his Twickenham residence the "Iliad" was finished triumphantly, and Pope was invited by the booksellers to edit Shakespeare. The task was one for which he had few qualifications, and his execution of it at once laid him open to a new attack from a fresh opponent, Lewis Theobald, afterward the Tibbald of the "Dunciad" and the "Satires." Then he followed up the "Iliad" by the "Odyssey," in which he was assisted by Fenton and Broome. Toward 1725 Bolingbroke settled at Dawley, and in the succeeding year Swift paid a long visit to Pope at Twickenham. These two influences may be traced in most of Pope's remaining works. In 1726, "Gulliver's Travels" saw the light, and in 1727 were issued those joint volumes of "Miscellanies" which contained the "Treatise on the Bathos," a prose satire, to be supplanted in brief space by the terrible "Dunciad." In this last, Pope entered upon a campaign against the smaller fry of the pen with a vigor, a deadly earnestness, and a determination to wound, unparalleled in the history of letters. One of the most gifted of his critics, the late Rector of Lincoln College, speaks of the "Dunciad" roundly as "an amalgam of dirt, ribaldry, and petty spite," and M. Taine brought against it the more fatal charge of tediousness. But even if one admits the indiscriminate nature of that onslaught which confuses Bentley with such creatures of a day as Ralph and Oldmixon, it is impossible not to admire the surpassing skill of the measure; and it is probable that, in spite of the "higher criticism," the "Dunciad," swarming as it does with contemporary allusions, will continue to hold its own with the antiquary and the literary historian, though it has ceased to be regarded as one of the desirable masterpieces of its class.

If Swift, who encouraged Pope in his war against Dulness, must be held to be indirectly responsible for the attack upon its strongholds, it was Bolingbroke who suggested the once popular epistles which Pope dedicated to him under the title of the "Essay on Man," a work which has this in common with the earlier "Essay on Criticism," that it is a versification of a given theme. But Pope understood the precepts of Rapin and Bossu better than the precepts of Leibnitz and St. John, and the "Essay on Man," bristling as it does with axiomatic felicities and "jewels five words long," has long been discredited as a philosophical treatise. It is to another hint from the sage of Dawley that we owe its author's most individual work. A chance remark of Bolingbroke set him upon the imitations of Horace that grew into the "Satires and Epistles." In these and the cognate "Moral Essays," which belong to his ripest period of production, Pope's unmatched mastery over heroics, perfected by the long probation of his Homeric translations, and his equally unrivalled powers of satire, let loose and emboldened by the brutalities of the "Dunciad," found their fitting field. Aimed at the old eternal vices and frailties of humanity, they assail them with a pungency, a force, a wit, and a directness which, in English verse, have no parallel. Indeed it may be doubted whether the portraits of Bufo and Sporus, of Atossa and Atticus, have been excelled in any language whatsoever.

The first of the Dialogues known as the "Epilogue to the Satires" was published in 1738, on the same morning as Johnson's "London," thus (in Boswell's view) providing England simultaneously with its Horace and its Juvenal. The second part followed in the same year. Besides these there is little which is material to be added to the record of Pope's work but the revised "Dunciad," in which, to gratify an increased antipathy, he displaced its old hero, Theobald, in favor of Colley Cibber, who, whatever his faults, was certainly not a typical dunce. Toward the close of his life those infirmities at which Wycherley had hinted in his youth grew upon him, and he became almost entirely dependent upon nurses. He had not, to use De Quincey's words, drawn that supreme prize in life, "a fine intellect with a healthy stomach," and his whole story testifies to that fact. As years went on his little figure, in its rusty black, was seen more rarely in the Twickenham lanes, and if he took the air upon the Thames, it was in a sedan-chair that was lifted into a boat. When he visited his friends his sleeplessness and his multiplied needs tired out the servants; while in the day-time he would nod in company, even though the Prince of Wales was talking of poetry. He was a martyr to sick headaches, and in the intervals of relief from them would be tormented by all sorts of morbid cravings for the very dietary which must inevitably secure their recurrence. This continued battle of the brain with the ignobler organs goes far to explain, if it may not excuse, much of the less admirable side of his character. His irritability, his artifice, his meannesses even, are more intelligible in the case of a man habitually racked with pain, and morbidly conscious of his physical shortcomings, than they would be in the case of those "whom God has made full-limbed and tall;" and, in the noble teaching of Arthur's court, his infirmities should entitle him to a larger charity of judgment.

Nothing in his life is more touching than the account of his last days, when he lay wasted with an intolerable asthma, waiting serenely for the end, but full of kindness and tender thoughtfulness for the friends who came and went about his bed. Bolingbroke was often there from Battersea, stirred to philosophic utterances and unphilosophic tears, and grave Lyttleton, and kind Lord Marchmont, and faithful Joseph Spence. Martha Blount, too, was not absent, and "it was very observable," said the spectators, how the sick man's strength and spirits seemed to revive at the approach of his favorite. "Here I am dying of a hundred good symptoms," he said to one of his visitors. What humiliated him most was his inability to think. "One of the things that I have always most wondered at (he told Spence) is that there should be any such thing as human vanity. If I had any, I had enough to mortify it a few days ago, for I lost my mind for a whole day." A little later Spence is telling Bolingbroke how, "on every catching and recovering of his mind," Pope is "always saying something kind either of his present or absent friends," and that it seems "as if his humanity had outlived his understanding." But the vital spark still continued to flicker in its socket, and only a day or two before his death he sat for three whole hours in his sedan-chair, in the garden he loved so well, then filled with the blossoms of May and smelling of the summer he was not to see. On the 29th he took an airing in Bushy Park, and a little later received the sacrament. On the evening of the following day he passed away so softly and painlessly that those who stood by knew not "the exact time of his departure." He had lived fifty-six years and nine days, and he was buried near to the monument of his father in the chancel of Twickenham Church. Seventeen years afterward Bishop Warburton erected a tablet to him in the same building, with an epitaph as idle as that which disgraces the tomb of Gay in Westminster Abbey. It is possible that Pope may at some time have written it, but the terms of his will prove conclusively that he never intended it to be used.

What is Pope's position as a poet? Time, that great practitioner of the exhaustive process, "sifting alway, sifting ever," even to the point of annihilation, has already half answered the question. No one now, except the literary historian or the student of versification, is ever likely to consult the "Pastorals" or "Windsor Forest;" and men will, in all probability, continue to quote "Hope springs eternal in the human breast" and "A little learning is a dangerous thing," without the least suspicion that the one comes from the seldom-read "Essay on Criticism" and the other from the equally seldom-read "Essay on Man." Here and there a professor like the late Professor Conington will praise the "unhasting unresting flow" of the translations from Homer; but the next generation will read its "Iliad" in the Greek, or in some future successor to Mr. William

Morris or Mr. Way. Few now re-echo the praises which the critics of fifty years ago gave to the "Elegy on an Unfortunate Lady" and "Eloisa to Abelard;" nor do any but the habitual pilgrims of the by-ways of literature devote their serious attention to the different versions of the "Dunciad." But there is no reason why the "Rape of the Lock" should not find as many admirers a hundred years hence as it does to-day, or why—so long as men remember the poems of the friend of Mæcenas—the "Satires and Epistles" should fail of an audience. In these Pope's verse is as perfect as it is anywhere; and his subject is borrowed, not from his commonplace book, but from his own experiences. He wants, it is true, the careless ease, the variety, the unemphatic grace of the Roman writer. But he has many of the qualities of his master; and it is probable that only when men weary of hearing how Horace strolled down the Sacred Way and met an intolerable Bore—only then, or perhaps a little earlier, will they cease to hearken how Alexander Pope bade John Searle bar the door at Twickenham against the combined inroad of Bedlam and Parnassus.

Austin Dobson

VOLTAIRE*

By M. C. Lockwood, D.D.

(1694–1778)

In order to justly estimate the life, character, and genius of a man it is necessary to possess some knowledge of the environments and heredity which generated him. Any study of Voltaire which ignores these influences will fail not only in doing him justice, but in comprehending his unique and exceptional place in history. The most careful examination of these, together with the voluminous bibliography relating to Voltaire provided by French, German, and English literature, still will leave him something of an enigma.

The stage properties and scenery were prepared for the great Frenchman long before he appeared, as is always the case with the famous actors in the drama of history. The time in which he was born

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was that of Louis XIV., king by divine right, whose history is that of one who was more the tinsel-robed actor, strutting in the semblance of royalty, and less the king than many

> "A poor player
> Who struts and frets his hour upon the stage,
> And then is heard no more."

Louis XIV. wore all the outward guise of regal office, in his bearing, politeness, address, magnificence, and high-heeled dignity, but he was sensual, ferocious, ignorant, profligate, and superstitious. His greatness was fictitious, his splendor superficial, and his character false. The king was the state, but his mistresses governed. A court thus constituted led the fashions and formed the manners of the people. It stamped the age with that type of character which belongs to the adventurer and devotee. The splendors of the court were maintained at the expense of the people. The glory of Versailles rose above the darkness of the nation. The voluptuous and luxurious pleasures of the nobility were the measure of the poverty and suffering of the people. The aristocracy enjoyed life as if it were a prolonged comedy, while the nation was moving toward the enactment of its greatest tragedy.

Religion was reduced to superstition, theology was divorced from ethics, ritual performances were substituted for moral obligations, and zeal for God manifested by cruelty to man—conditions which are invariably concomitant in religious history. The Mephistopheles evoked by the German Reformation was abroad, and had announced himself to others besides Dr. Faustus, saying, "I am the Spirit who denies." Freedom of thought involves a liberty to think wrongly as well as rightly. Technical learning, in possession of the Jesuits, might content a religious devotee; but philosophy and the new science opened paths which led away from traditions and authoritative decretals; paths which neither priest nor king could close, for they followed the stars in their courses. The waymarks had been blazed by the genius of Galileo and Copernicus. Those who dared to venture into this new territory found institutions and systems of theology arrayed against them, armed with the power of present persecution, more to be feared than threats of future damnation. Public life was venal, the Church simoniacal, and society licentious. In such an age Voltaire was born.

The family of Arouet was ancient and respectable, representing the middle class of society. Voltaire's grandfather settled in early life in Paris, and retired on a comfortable fortune made by selling cloth. His father, François Arouet, was a successful notary of Paris, an honorable profession, which included all that is now done among us by lawyers, brokers, life-insurers, and administrators of estates. Many of the characteristics which we discover in his father, and, indeed, in all the Arouets, survive in Voltaire. They are vivacity, thrift, irritability, and withal a pleasing and generous disposition.

François Marie Arouet was the youngest child of a too prolific mother. He was born November 21, 1694, a weakly, feeble babe whose life was despaired of during the first year. The child was abandoned to the care of a nurse, his mother being an invalid. She died when he reached the age of seven. By the time the infant was two years old he began to thrive, and grew into an active, healthy child. Not robust, he was, nevertheless, wiry, and endowed with nervous energy.

His earliest instruction was from the Abbé de Châteauneuf, who taught him belles lettres and deism. At a very early age the little lad exhibited a precocious talent for versification. When ten years old he was sent to the Collége Louis-le-Grand. Here he remained until he was seventeen, receiving an education which, though always depreciated by him, provided the basis of a wide and varied knowledge. The Jesuits, who were the instructors at this college, retained the methods of the schools of the Renaissance, in which plays in Latin and French were enacted by the scholars. This may explain his lifelong devotion to the drama.

His remarkable poetic talent led to an introduction, when he was but eleven years old, to Ninon de l'Enclos, who, in her nineteenth year, was the leader of a brilliant coterie of society. This unaccountable and marvellous woman was so pleased with the lad that she left him a legacy of two thousand livres "to buy books with."

When his college days were ended his troubles began. His father had determined to make him a notary. The youth wanted to follow literature, which the father regarded as equal to no profession at all. The father triumphed in so far as securing the young man's consent to begin the study of law. He began but never proceeded, and gave himself to everything but the pursuit of legal lore. The Abbé de Châteauneuf, the godfather of Voltaire, died before the boy's college days were over, but before his death he introduced his pupil to the celebrated society of the Epicureans of the Temple. Here the youth gathered the vast mass of historical gossip which served him so well in later years. His father was disgusted with his son's pursuits, and, alarmed at his association with princes and philosophers, he sent him away to the ancient Norman city of Caen. This did not effect a cure. The notary sent word to his son that if he would settle down and finish his studies he would purchase for him a commission as counsellor to the Parliament of Paris. "Tell my father," he answered, "that I do not desire any place which can be bought. I shall know how to make one for myself that will cost nothing."

Voltaire had a brother, named Armand, who was a Jansenist and bigot. Their father commented on his two sons by saying, "I have a pair of fools for sons, one in verse and the other in prose."

In the year 1713 the Marquis de Châteauneuf, a brother of the Abbé, appointed Voltaire to the office of page in his diplomatic corps. The marquis was Ambassador to The Hague. Here the young man fell desperately in love with Olympe Dunoyer, a young woman about twenty-one years of age, and the daughter of a woman who had separated from her husband, and supported herself by writing disreputable scandal and gossip. This love affair was violently opposed by the mother and resulted in the young man's being sent back to Paris. For a brief time he gladdened the heart of his father by resuming the study of law, but soon manifested his peculiar facility for getting into trouble.

Defeated in securing an award from the French Academy for a poem, he turned his wit against the successful candidate, and also the poet La Motte, who had decided the competition. A large part of his attack was harmless fun, but a short and very savage satire aimed at La Motte was dangerous to its author, so his father was glad of the opportunity to send his scapegrace to the Château de St. Ange, in company with De Camartin, nephew of the Marquis de Saint Ange. The old marquis was a just and brilliant magistrate, a man familiar with the history of France, and who knew the genealogies of the French court, and all the rare anecdotes of the period included by the reigns of Henry IV. and Louis XIV. That Voltaire improved these days at St. Ange is undoubted.

He returned to Paris at the time of the death of the king. This time he was admitted to the famous "court of Sceaux," over which reigned the brilliant Duchesse du Maine. It is charged that he assisted the duchess in composing lampoons on the Duke of Orleans, then Prince Regent. Accused of writing two libels, he was arrested, May 16, 1717, and sent to the Bastile, in which prison he spent eleven months. While here he gave himself to serious literary labor. At this time he changed his name, and was henceforth known as Arouet de Voltaire. The origin of the new name is one of the disputed problems of biography.

Released from the Bastile, he was, according to custom, ordered into exile, being permitted to go to a place owned by his father in the village of Châtenay. In October, 1718, he was permitted formally to return to Paris. In the spring of the following year he was suspected of having written the "Philippiques," and was banished informally from Paris. Most of this period he spent with Marshal Villars, and gathered more of those reminiscences, which he used with so much skill later in his career, besides making harmless love to the duchess, the wife of his host. In 1721 his father died, leaving him an income of about four thousand livres a year, and this was further increased by a pension of two thousand livres a year from the Regent in recognition of his ability as a dramatic writer.

Several years were spent in Paris in literary labors and in acquiring powerful friends and more powerful enemies; among the latter was the Chevalier de Rohan, who insulted Voltaire on different occasions, which led to sharp replies from the caustic youth. The chevalier hired some roughs to give him a caning. Voltaire could get no one to take his part, so he challenged the chevalier to a duel. The challenge was accepted, but on the morning of the day appointed for the meeting the Government interfered by kindly arresting Voltaire and putting him again in the Bastile.

After fifteen days of imprisonment he was released on condition that he would go to England. The chief turnkey of the Bastile was instructed to go as far as Calais with the troublesome prisoner, in order to be sure that he was forwarded to his destination. Nothing in Voltaire's history did more to form his career than his visit to England. He made a good deal of money there, and it is said, laid the foundations of his fortune. He formed acquaintances among the foremost literary men of that nation, such as the Walpoles, Bubb Doddington, Bolingbroke, Congreve, Sir Everard Falkener, and the poet Pope. The effect of these associations in the literary career of Voltaire is marked. They deepened and broadened his mind, and reduced the flippancy of method, which is the bane of French literature, to its minimum.

He suffered an exile of three years, a long term for the offence he had committed. In 1729 he was permitted to return to Paris. That year, by a lottery speculation, in which he was a sure winner, he secured enough money, when added to what he already possessed, to render him independent of all patronage. From this time on he never knew the want of money, nor permitted an opportunity to pass by which he could increase his riches.

The next few years were mainly devoted to the production of poems, plays, and English letters. During these years his pen continually brought him into difficulty. Some of his productions he denied. At last, in 1734, when a pirated edition of his English letters appeared, containing also a criticism upon the fanaticism of the saintly Pascal, full of heresy, good sense, and keen satire, the fury of the storm broke upon him again. A warrant was immediately issued for his arrest; the officer charged with the duty of capturing him found that Voltaire had left the Château at Monjeau, where he had been in attendance at the wedding of the Duke de Richelieu, so the arrest was not made.

We now find him at the Château of Madame du Châtelet. His relations with this woman will not bear scrutiny. The most charitable construction which can be put upon the fifteen years during which Voltaire lived with her is, that she, like himself, was morally the product of the age. If, however, it is urged against them that there were pure women and honorable men in France at that time, it may be asserted that such were men and women who had not been surrounded from childhood with the influences and social customs in which Voltaire and Madame du Châtelet lived, moved, and had their being.

When this woman died Voltaire found himself in a very unsettled condition. During his life at the Château de Cirey he had received letters from Prince Frederick of Prussia. Now the prince is king, and he asks Voltaire to be his guest, and find with him a refuge and a home. The "respectable Emily" being dead, Voltaire, after considerable haggling about money matters with Frederick, who behaved generously, at last consented.

In the year 1751 the French author reached Berlin. Frederick treated him in a right kingly way. From the very first Voltaire behaved like a marplot, rather than as the guest of a king. Quarrel succeeded quarrel. Most of his embroilments with the king were of less credit to Voltaire than to Frederick. The former was as full of tricks as Puck, and impish in his mischief. Frederick was overbearing and tyrannical. Having a rude sense of justice, being German, he would grant no license to the stinging, envious satires of the jealous, envious Frenchman. They managed to get on with each other for about three years. Voltaire disgusted Frederick by getting into a lawsuit with a Jewish banker,

JULES GIRARDET

[illegible]

named Hirsch about a discreditable speculation in Saxony money. Finally he began a violent controversy with Maupertuis, president of the Berlin Academy. He libelled this boorish but able scholar, who held his office by appointment of Frederick. He lied to the king concerning one of the most cutting satires in literature, which was aimed at the president. He tricked the king in the shabbiest manner. He had succeeded in getting into difficulty with his usual facility.

He asked for permission to leave the court of Frederick, pleading business at Paris, and also that his health required him to visit Plombières, in order to drink of its waters. Frederick gave him leave to go. On the eve of going, in utter disregard of his promise to the king, he fired a parting shot at Maupertuis, in the shape of a supplement to the attack he had already made, then travelled leisurely on his way. Frederick waited until he reached Frankfort; there he was detained by order of the king on the charge of having some verses written by Frederick in his possession. The resident at Frankfort was as stupid and clumsy as a German official can be, and managed the affair in a most rude and indelicate manner. Exasperated at the delay, Voltaire committed the folly of undertaking to steal away. He and his niece were arrested and imprisoned in an inn, where they were subjected to very unpleasant treatment. The action of Frederick was unworthy of a king. Its meanness was intensified by the bungling stupidity of the resident. The people of Frankfort grew indignant, and the burgomaster began to show resentment, for Frankfort was a free city and the King of Prussia had no right to trespass upon its privileges. It was mean in a monarch to strike this foul blow because he had been pricked with a sharp pin.

From this time forth Voltaire entered upon a life of complete independence, free from all incumbrances of mistresses, royal patrons, or aristocratic friends. He tried residence in Geneva and Lausanne, but while he found political liberty, he was not accorded by the pious Swiss the social freedom to which he was accustomed in France. Finally he purchased a place at Ferney. His home here became the Mecca to which the literary celebrities of Europe made pilgrimages. At Ferney he established watch-manufacturing, competing with the Swiss; here also he built a church, inscribing upon it "*Deo erexit Voltaire.*" In pure mischievousness he entered upon an indecent controversy with the bishop of the diocese, who was a good though foolish man. He also managed to quarrel right and left with all sorts of people, while slowly and imperceptibly old age crept upon him. Much of the noblest work of his life was done here. It was while at Ferney that he adopted a young girl of noble but poor family, rescuing her from a convent and marrying her to the Marquis de Villete. She contributed to making many of his declining years bright with her presence. His pet name for her was "Belle et Bonne."

For some of his work done at Ferney he has won the respect and admiration of mankind. Such were his noble defence of the Calas family, his successful attack upon the outrages committed upon Sirven and his family, securing the liberation of Espinasse from the galleys, the vindication of General Lally, and the brave battle for D'Etalonde and La Barre, together with many other cases in which his powerful pen proved its strength in defence of the weak against the oppression of civil and ecclesiastical tyranny.

This part of his career provides the staple material for his eulogists, as it is not without genuine value. With the death of Louis XV., Voltaire evidently expected that he would be invited to return to Paris, but the government did not give him any encouragement. By the beginning of 1778 he had finished a tragedy entitled "Irene," and on February 10th he arrived in Paris after an absence of twenty-eight years. Though not received very cordially by the ministry, he was heartily welcomed by the Academy and all the foreign celebrities at the capital, among them the American minister, Dr. Benjamin Franklin, to whom he said · "If I were only forty years old I would immediately go and settle in your happy country." An hour after Franklin left, the English ambassador called, to whom he made himself equally agreeable.

The prolonged excitement of the continuous attention paid him, at last brought on a severe illness. In order to secure the right of burial in consecrated ground he professed conversion. Recovering temporarily, he scoffed at himself, saying, "It is necessary for a man to die in the religion of his fathers. If I lived on the banks of the Ganges I should wish to die with a cow's tail in my hand." Before he died his secretary, Wagniere, entreated him to state precisely his "way of thinking" concerning religion. Voltaire asked for paper and ink and then wrote and signed the following, which is now to be seen in the National Library at Paris: "I die adoring God, loving my friends, not hating my enemies, and detesting superstition. Feb. 28th, 1778. Voltaire."

His play "Irene" was first given on March 16th. By the 30th of the month he was able to attend, and that night, in the theatre, received an ovation unequalled in history. Shortly after, his illness returned, in which he lingered until May 30, 1778, dying at the age of eighty-three years and six months. There was difficulty in securing a permit for his burial, and not until 1791 did his body find a resting-place in the Pantheon.

As a dramatist he ranks next to Racine and Corneille, but as an epic poet he is a failure. His romances are probably the best evidences of his versatile and wonderful powers. They embody all the hate and really noble anger of his soul against the evils which were crushing the life of the French people. Their wit never fails, and they flash and sparkle with his matchless brilliancy of satire. As a writer of history he has never been regarded as possessing very great merit, for two reasons: First, he was totally lacking in any grasp of the philosophy of history; second, he was not careful as to accuracy in stating facts. His philosophical works are largely covert attacks upon the religious and ecclesiastical systems of his day. These are interesting reading matter if one does not regard the absurdity of any permanent claims to physics or metaphysics which they contain.

His criticisms and miscellaneous works reveal all the characteristics of his other writings—pungent, witty, sharp; indicating, however, more of the skill of the journalist than of the great author. He has not left a single line which embodies a great thought. He was a man of supernatural brilliancy rather than of great genius. Had his work been less witty and bright, he would be charged with superficiality ; that which saves him from the accusation is the marvellous display of mental acuteness and a perfect mastery of the French language. The thought in his productions is as ephemeral as that in a morning newspaper ; but his composition will serve to this day as a model of the possibilities of the French tongue. In this respect he is unrivalled.

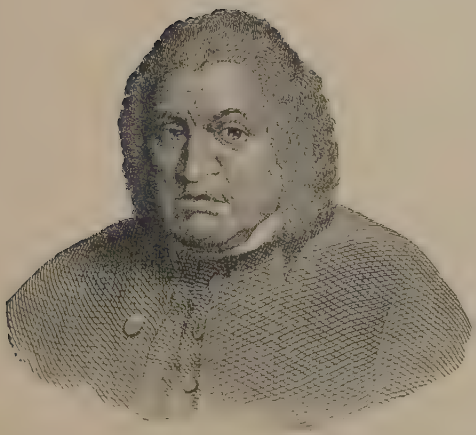
Popular conceptions of Voltaire are in some respects erroneous. He is regarded as an arch-infidel and bitter foe of religion. On the contrary, he was always a deist. He never assails "The Sermon on the Mount," nor can one who reads him carefully believe that there would not have been a subtle sympathy between him and the best religious minds of later days. He never mocked men who lived good lives, nor opposed with any bitterness those who were the friends of liberty of conscience.

M. C. Lockwood

SAMUEL JOHNSON[*]

By Lord Macaulay

(1709–1784)



Samuel Johnson, one of the most eminent English writers of the eighteenth century, was the son of Michael Johnson, who was, at the beginning of that century, a magistrate of Lichfield, and a bookseller of great note in the Midland Counties. Michael's abilities and attainments seem to have been considerable. He was so well acquainted with the contents of the volumes which he exposed to sale, that the country rectors of Staffordshire and Worcestershire thought him an oracle on points of learning. Between him and the clergy, indeed, there was a strong religious and political sympathy. He was a zealous churchman, and, though he qualified himself for municipal office by taking the oaths to the sovereigns in possession, was to the last a Jacobite in heart. At his house, a house which is still pointed out to every traveller who visits Lichfield, Samuel was born, on September 18, 1709. In the child the physical, intellectual, and moral peculiarities which afterward distinguished the man were plainly discernible; great muscular strength accompanied by much awkwardness and many infirmities; great quickness of parts, with a morbid propensity to sloth and procrastination; a kind and generous heart, with a gloomy and irritable temper.* He had inherited from his ancestors a scrofulous taint, which it was beyond the power of medicine to remove. His parents were weak enough to believe that the royal touch was a specific for this malady. In his third year he was taken up to London, inspected by the court surgeon, prayed over by the court chaplains, and stroked and presented with a piece of gold by Queen Anne. One of his earliest recollections was that of a stately lady in a diamond stomacher and a long black hood. Her hand was applied in vain. The boy's features, which were originally noble and not irregular, were distorted by his malady. His cheeks were deeply scarred. He lost for a time the sight of one eye, and he saw but very imperfectly with the other. But the force of his mind overcame every impediment. Indolent as he was, he acquired knowledge with such ease and rapidity, that at every school to which he was sent he was soon the best scholar. From sixteen to eighteen he resided at home, and was left to his own devices. He learned much at this time, though his studies were without guidance and without plan. He ransacked his father's shelves, dipped into a multitude of books, read what was interesting, and passed over what was dull. An ordinary lad would have acquired little or no useful knowledge in such a way; but much that was dull to ordinary lads was interesting to Samuel.

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While he was thus irregularly educating himself, his family was sinking into hopeless poverty. Old Michael Johnson was much better qualified to pore upon books, and to talk about them, than to trade in them. His business declined: his debts increased; it was with difficulty that the daily expenses of his household were defrayed. It was out of his power to support his son at either university; but a wealthy neighbor offered assistance; and, in reliance on promises which proved to be of very little value, Samuel was entered at Pembroke College, Oxford. When the young scholar presented himself to the rulers of that society, they were amazed not more by his ungainly figure and eccentric manners than by the quantity of extensive and curious information which he had picked up during many months of desultory, but not unprofitable study. On the first day of his residence he surprised his teachers by quoting Macrobius; and one of the most learned among them declared, that he had never known a freshman of equal attainments.

* Johnson himself tells a story strongly illustrative of the character both of the man and boy. He says, "Once, indeed, I was disobedient; I refused to attend my father to Uttoxeter-market. Pride was the source of that refusal, and the remembrance of it was painful. A few years ago, I desired to atone for this fault; I went to Uttoxeter in very bad weather, and stood for a considerable time bareheaded in the rain, on the spot where my father's stall used to stand. In contrition I stood, and I hope the penance was expiatory."—Boswell's "Life of Johnson."

Adrian Stokes.

ADRIAN STOKES PINXIT.

DR. JOHNSON'S PENANCE.

At Oxford Johnson resided during about three years. He was poor, even to raggedness; and his appearance excited a mirth and a pity which were equally intolerable to his haughty spirit. He was driven from the quadrangle of Christ Church by the sneering looks which the members of that aristocratical society cast at the holes in his shoes. Some charitable person placed a new pair at his door; but he spurned them away in a fury. Distress made him, not servile, but reckless and ungovernable. No opulent gentleman commoner panting for one-and-twenty could have treated the academical authorities with more gross disrespect. The needy scholar was generally to be seen under the gate of Pembroke, a gate now adorned with his effigy, haranguing a circle of lads, over whom, in spite of his tattered gown and dirty linen, his wit and audacity gave him an undisputed ascendancy. In every mutiny against the discipline of the college he was the ringleader. Much was pardoned, however, to a youth so highly distinguished by abilities and acquirements. He had early made himself known by turning Pope's "Messiah" into Latin verse. The style and rhythm, indeed, were not exactly Virgilian; but the translation found many admirers, and was read with pleasure by Pope himself.

The time drew near at which Johnson would, in the ordinary course of things, have become a Bachelor of Arts; but he was at the end of his resources. Those promises of support on which he had relied had not been kept. His family could do nothing for him. His debts to Oxford tradesmen were small indeed, yet larger than he could pay. In the autumn of 1731 he was under the necessity of quitting the university without a degree. In the following winter his father died. The old man left but a pittance; and of that pittance almost the whole was appropriated to the support of his widow. The property to which Samuel succeeded amounted to no more than twenty pounds.

His life, during the thirty years which followed, was one hard struggle with poverty. The misery of that struggle needed no aggravation, but was aggravated by the sufferings of an unsound body and an unsound mind. Before the young man left the university his hereditary malady had broken forth in a singularly cruel form. He had become an incurable hypochondriac. He said long after that he had been mad all his life, or at least not perfectly sane; and, in truth, eccentricities less strange than his have often been thought grounds sufficient for absolving felons and for setting aside wills. His grimaces, his gestures, his mutterings, sometimes diverted and sometimes terrified people who did not know him.

With such infirmities of body and of mind this celebrated man was left, at two-and-twenty, to fight his way through the world. He remained during about five years in the Midland Counties. At Lichfield, his birthplace and his early home, he had inherited some friends and acquired others. He was kindly noticed by Henry Hervey, a gay officer of noble family, who happened to be quartered there. Gilbert Walmesley, registrar of the ecclesiastical court of the diocese, a man of distinguished parts, learning, and knowledge of the world, did himself honor by patronizing the young adventurer, whose repulsive person, unpolished manners, and squalid garb moved many of the petty aristocracy of the neighborhood to laughter or to disgust. At Lichfield, however, Johnson could find no way of earning a livelihood. He became usher of a grammar-school in Leicestershire; he resided as a humble companion in the house of a country gentleman; but a life of dependence was insupportable to his haughty spirit. He repaired to Birmingham, and there earned a few guineas by literary drudgery. In that town he printed a translation, little noticed at the time, and long forgotten, of a Latin book about Abyssinia. He then put forth proposals for publishing by subscription the poems of Politian, with notes containing a history of modern Latin verse; but subscriptions did not come in and the volume never appeared.

While leading this vagrant and miserable life Johnson fell in love. The object of his passion was Mrs. Elizabeth Porter, a widow, who had children as old as himself. To ordinary spectators the lady appeared to be a short, fat, coarse woman, painted half an inch thick, dressed in gaudy colors, and fond of exhibiting provincial airs and graces which were not exactly those of the Queensberrys and Lepels. To Johnson, however, whose passions were strong, whose eyesight was too weak to distinguish ceruse from natural bloom, and who had seldom or never been in the same room with a woman of real fashion, his Titty, as he called her, was the most beautiful, graceful, and accomplished of her sex. That his admiration was unfeigned cannot be doubted; for she was as poor as himself. She accepted, with a readiness which did her little honor, the addresses of a suitor who might have been her son. The marriage, however, in spite of occasional wranglings, proved happier than might have been expected. The lover continued to be under the illusions of the wedding-day till the lady died, in her sixty-fourth year. On her monument he placed an inscription, extolling the charms of her person and of her manners; and when, long after her decease, he had occasion to mention her, he exclaimed, with a tenderness half ludicrous, half pathetic, "Pretty creature!"

His marriage made it necessary for him to exert himself more strenuously than he had hitherto done. He took a house in the neighborhood of his native town and advertised for pupils. But eighteen months passed away, and only three pupils came to his academy. Indeed, his appearance was so strange, and his temper so violent, that his school-room must have resembled an ogre's den. Nor was the tawdry, painted grandmother whom he called his Titty well qualified to make provision for the comfort of young gentlemen. David Garrick, who was one of the pupils, used, many years later, to throw the best company of London into convulsions of laughter by mimicking the endearments of this extraordinary pair.

At length Johnson, in the twenty-eighth year of his age, determined to seek his fortune in the capital as a literary adventurer. He set out with a few guineas, three acts of the tragedy of "Irene" in manuscript, and two or three letters of introduction from his friend Walmesley.

Some time appears to have elapsed before Johnson was able to form any literary connection from which he could expect more than bread for the day which was passing over him. He never forgot the generosity with which Hervey, who was now residing in London, relieved his wants during this time of trial. "Harry Hervey," said the old philosopher, many years later, "was a vicious man; but he was very kind to me. If you call a dog Hervey, I shall love him." At Hervey's table Johnson sometimes enjoyed feasts which were made more agreeable by contrast. But in general he dined, and thought that he dined well, on sixpennyworth of meat and a pennyworth of bread at an ale-house near Drury Lane.

About a year after Johnson had begun to reside in London he was fortunate enough to obtain regular employment from Cave, an enterprising and intelligent bookseller, who was proprietor and editor of the *Gentleman's Magazine.*

A few weeks after Johnson had entered on these obscure labors he published a work which at once placed him high among the writers of his age. It is probable that what he had suffered during his first year in London had often reminded him of some parts of that noble poem in which Juvenal had described the misery and degradation of a needy man of letters, lodged among the pigeons' nests in the tottering garrets which overhung the streets of Rome. Pope's admirable imitations of Horace's "Satires and Epistles" had recently appeared, were in every hand, and were by many readers thought superior to the originals. What Pope had done for Horace, Johnson aspired to do for Juvenal. The enterprise was bold, and yet judicious. For between Johnson and Juvenal there was much in common—much more, certainly, than between Pope and Horace.

Johnson's "London" appeared, without his name, in May, 1738. He received only ten guineas for this stately and vigorous poem; but the sale was rapid and the success complete. A second edition was required within a week. Those small critics who are always desirous to lower established reputations ran about proclaiming that the anonymous satirist was superior to Pope in Pope's own peculiar department of literature. It ought to be remembered, to the honor of Pope, that he joined heartily in the applause with which the appearance of a rival genius was welcomed. He then made inquiries about the author of "London." Such a man, he said, could not long be concealed. The name was soon discovered; and Pope, with great kindness, exerted himself to obtain an academical degree and the mastership of a grammar-school for the poor young poet. The attempt failed, and Johnson remained a bookseller's hack.

The fame of his abilities and learning continued to grow. Warburton pronounced him a man of parts and genius; and the praise of Warburton was then no light thing. Such was Johnson's reputation that, in 1747, several eminent booksellers combined to employ him in the arduous work of preparing a dictionary of the English language, in two folio volumes. The sum which they agreed to pay him was only fifteen hundred guineas; and out of this sum he had to pay several poor men of letters who assisted him in the humbler parts of his task.

Johnson had flattered himself that he should have completed his dictionary by the end of 1750, but it was not till 1755 that he at length gave his huge volumes to the world. During the seven years which he passed in the drudgery of penning definitions and marking quotations for transcription, he sought for relaxation in literary labor of a more agreeable kind. In 1749 he published the "Vanity of Human Wishes," an excellent imitation of the Tenth Satire of Juvenal. It is, in truth, not easy to say whether the palm belongs to the ancient or to the modern poet.

About a year after the representation of "Irene" he began to publish a series of short essays on morals, manners, and literature. This species of composition had been brought into fashion by the success of *The Tattler*, and by the still more brilliant success of *The Spectator*. A crowd of small writers had vainly attempted to rival Addison. *The Lay Monastery*, *The Censor*, *The Freethinker*, *The Plain-Dealer*, *The Champion*, and other works of the same kind, had had their short day. None of them had obtained a permanent place in our literature, and they are now to be found only in the libraries of the curious. At length Johnson undertook the adventure in which so many aspirants had failed. In the thirty-sixth year after the appearance of the last number of *The Spectator* appeared the first number of *The Rambler*. From March, 1750, to March, 1752, this paper continued to come out every Tuesday and Saturday.

From the first *The Rambler* was enthusiastically admired by a few eminent men. Richardson, when only five numbers had appeared, pronounced it equal if not superior to *The Spectator*. Young and Hartley expressed their approbation not less warmly. Bubb Dodington, among whose faults indifference to the claims of genius and learning cannot be reckoned, solicited the acquaintance of the writer. In consequence probably of the good offices of Dodington, who was then the confidential adviser of Prince Frederick, two of his Royal Highness's gentlemen carried a gracious message to the printing-office, and ordered seven copies for Leicester House.

The last *Rambler* was written in a sad and gloomy hour. Mrs. Johnson had been given over by the physicians. Three days later she died. She left her husband almost broken-hearted. Many people had been surprised to see a man of his genius and learning stooping to every drudgery and denying himself almost every comfort, for the purpose of supplying a silly, affected old woman with superfluities which she accepted with but little gratitude. But all his affection had been concentrated on her. He had neither brother nor sister, neither son nor daughter. To him she was as beautiful as the Gunnings, and witty as Lady Mary. Her opinion of his writings was more important to him than the voice of the pit of Drury Lane Theatre, or the judgment of the *Monthly Review*. The chief support which had sustained him through the most arduous labor of his life was the hope that she would enjoy the fame and the profit which he anticipated from his Dictionary. She was gone; and in that vast labyrinth of streets, peopled by eight hundred thousand human beings, he was alone. Yet it was necessary for him to set himself, as he expressed it, doggedly to work. After three more laborious years the Dictionary was at length complete.

In the spring of 1758 Johnson put forth the first of a series of essays entitled *The Idler*. During two years these essays continued to appear weekly. They were eagerly read, widely circulated, and, indeed, impudently pirated while they were still in the original form, and had a large sale when collected into volumes. *The Idler* may be described as a second part of *The Rambler*, somewhat livelier and somewhat weaker than the first part.

While Johnson was busied with his *Idlers*, his mother, who had accomplished her ninetieth year, died at Lichfield. It was long since he had seen her; but he had not failed to contribute largely out of his small means to her comfort. In order to defray the charges of her funeral, and to pay some debts which she had left, he wrote a little book in a single week, and sent off the sheets to the press without reading them over. A hundred pounds were paid him for the copyright; and the purchasers had great cause to be pleased with their bargain, for the book was "Rasselas."

By such exertions as have been described Johnson supported himself till the year 1762. In that year a great change in his circumstances took place. He had from a child been an enemy of the reigning dynasty. His Jacobite prejudices had been exhibited with little disguise both in his works and in his conversation. Even in his massy and elaborate Dictionary he had, with a strange want of taste and judgment, inserted bitter and contumelious reflections on the Whig party. The excise, which was a favorite resource of Whig financiers, he had designated as a hateful tax. He had railed against the Commissioners of Excise in language so coarse that they had seriously thought of prosecuting him. He had with difficulty been prevented from holding up the Lord Privy Seal by name as an example of the meaning of the word "renegade." A pension he had defined as a pay given to a state hireling to betray his country; a pensioner as a slave of state hired by a stipend to obey a master. It seemed unlikely that the author of these definitions would himself be pensioned. But that was a time of wonders. George the Third had ascended the throne, and had, in the course of a few months, disgusted many of the old friends, and conciliated many of the old enemies of his house. The city was becoming mutinous. Oxford was becoming loyal. Cavendishes and Bentincks were murmuring. Somersets and Wyndhams were hastening to kiss hands. The head of the treasury was now Lord Bute, who was a Tory, and could have no objection to Johnson's Toryism. Bute wished to be thought a patron of men of letters, and Johnson was one of the most eminent, and one of the most needy men of letters in Europe. A pension of three hundred a year was graciously offered, and with very little hesitation accepted.

This event produced a change in Johnson's whole way of life. For the first time since his boyhood he no longer felt the daily goad urging him to the daily toil. He was at liberty, after thirty years of anxiety and drudgery, to indulge his constitutional indolence, to lie in bed till two in the afternoon, and to sit up talking till four in the morning, without fearing either the printer's devil or the sheriff's officer.

But though his pen was now idle, his tongue was active. The influence exercised by his conversation, directly upon those with whom he lived, and indirectly on the whole literary world, was altogether without parallel. His colloquial talents were indeed of the highest order. He had strong sense, quick discernment, wit, humor, immense knowledge of literature and of life, and an infinite store of curious anecdotes. As respected style, he spoke far better than he wrote. Every sentence which dropped from his lips was as correct in structure as the most nicely balanced period of *The Rambler*. But in his talk there were no pompous triads, and little more than a fair proportion of words in *osity* and *ation*. All was simplicity, ease, and vigor. He uttered his short, weighty, and pointed sentences with a power of voice, and a justness and energy of emphasis, of which the effect was rather increased than diminished by the rollings of his huge form, and by the asthmatic gaspings and puffings in which the peals of his eloquence generally ended. Nor did the laziness which made him unwilling to sit down to his desk prevent him from giving instruction or entertainment orally To discuss questions of taste, of learning, of casuistry, in language so exact and so forcible that it might have been printed without the alteration of a word, was to him no exertion, but a pleasure. He loved, as he said, to fold his legs and have his talk out. He was ready to bestow the overflowings of his full mind on anybody who would start a subject, on a fellow-passenger in a stage-coach, or on the person who sat at the same table with him in an eating-house. But his conversation was nowhere so brilliant and striking as when he was surrounded by a few friends, whose abilities and knowledge enabled them, as he once expressed it, to send him back every ball that he threw.

On Easter eve, 1777, some persons, deputed by a meeting which consisted of forty of the first booksellers in London, called upon Johnson. Though he had some scruples about doing business at that season, he received his visitors with much civility. They came to inform him that a new edition of the English poets, from Cowley downward, was in contemplation, and to ask him to furnish short biographical prefaces. He readily undertook the task, a task for which he was pre-eminently qualified. His knowledge of the literary history of England since the Restoration was unrivalled. That knowledge he had derived partly from books, and partly from sources which had long been closed; from old Grub-Street traditions; from the talk of forgotten poetasters and pamphleteers who had long been lying in parish vaults; from the recollections of such men as Gilbert Walmesley, who had conversed with the wits of Button; Cibber, who had mutilated the plays of two generations of dramatists; Orrery, who had been admitted to the society of Swift; and Savage, who had rendered services of no very honorable kind to Pope. The biographer, therefore, sat down to his task with a mind full of matter. He had at first intended to give only a paragraph to every minor poet, and only four or five pages to the greatest name. But the flood of anecdote and criticism overflowed the narrow channel. The work, which was originally meant to consist only of a few sheets, swelled into ten volumes—small volumes, it is true, and not closely printed. The first four appeared in 1779, the remaining six in 1781.

When at length the moment, dreaded through so many years, came close, the dark cloud passed away from Johnson's mind. His temper became unusually patient and gentle; he ceased to think with terror of death, and of that which lies beyond death; and he spoke much of the mercy of God, and of the propitiation of Christ. In this serene frame of mind he died, on December 13, 1784. He was laid, a week later, in Westminster Abbey, among the eminent men of whom he had been the historian—Cowley and Denham, Dryden and Congreve, Gay, Prior, and Addison.

THOMAS CHATTERTON*

By Colonel Richard Malcolm Johnston

(1752–1770)

Thomas Chatterton, whose career among all those of English men of letters was the most eccentric, was a posthumous son of a poor man who, besides being a choir-singer, kept the Pyle Street School in the city of Bristol, England. In a small tenement-house near by he was born, November 20, 1752. The mother maintained her two children, Thomas and a daughter two years older, by keeping a small school for girls. At the age of five years the boy was sent to the Pyle Street School, where the master, unable to teach him anything and deciding that he was an idiot, dismissed him. For a year and a half afterward he was so regarded. During this time he was often subjected to paroxysms of grief which were expressed generally in silent tears, but sometimes in cries continued for many hours. By many an expedient of a parent who understood him not, from frequent serious affectionate remonstrance to an occasional blow upon his face, he was led or forced along. One day this parent, while about to destroy an old manuscript in French, noticed the child looking with intense interest at the illuminated letters upon its pages. Withholding the paper from its threatened destruction she briefly succeeded in teaching him therefrom the alphabet, and in time from a black-letter Bible he learned to read. Not long afterward the family removed to a house near the Church of St. Mary Redcliffe, one of the oldest and noblest among the parochial structures in England. In a room called the Treasury House, over one of the porches of this church, was a pile of ancient documents, muniments of title, parish registers, and other things, which had been removed by the latest Chatterton, and which

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were kept in the house now occupied by the family. The boy when eight years old was sent to the Blue Coat, a charity school, where he learned with rapidity the elements taught thereat. The time not occupied with school tasks he devoted to reading whatever books he could borrow or obtain from a circulating library. While engaged in study he seemed unaware of everything passing around him. At twelve years of age he probably had read a larger number of books than any child who ever lived.

It is curious to study how the genius of some persons is developed and their destiny determined by the conditions of their childhood. The Chattertons for a hundred and fifty years had been sextons in St. Mary Redcliffe, the last being John, uncle of the poet. Whatever might have been in the transmission through several generations of ghostly interest in this monument of the Middle Ages, it is known that to Thomas Chatterton it was of all earthly objects the one most interesting. For the sports of other lads he had no heart; his leisure time was spent in the church, and in the study of its history and its varied quaint literature. In time he began to imitate the ancient manuscripts now in his mother's house, and with ochre, charcoal, and black lead, his success in that line was marvellous. These habits induced others kindred, among them absence of mind, under whose influence, sometimes, when in the company of others, he gazed silently at and about them with dreaminess, as if he was thinking how to connect contemporary things strange to him with those, his only familiars, two centuries before. It seems a pity for such a spirit to be without other guides than a weak, toiling mother, and a teacher dull and despotic as the head-master of the Blue Coat School. Of other things than books he had opportunities to learn little. The sense of honorable duty, either he had not been taught or its principles had been inculcated in ways too meaningless to make enduring impression upon his being. Under influences more benign he might have made a career, if not more brilliant, more felicitous. At the age of ten years he wrote some verses entitled "On the Last Epiphany," which, printed in *Farley's Journal*, showed that he had, if not high poetic genius, at least extraordinary sensibility of rhythm. Unfortunately his mind conceived for most of what he saw around him a hostility which drove him to express it in satirical phrase. A church-warden, whose name of Joseph Thomas would not have survived but for Chatterton's verses, was made immortal for the changes made by him while intent upon destroying ancient monuments, interfering with his own ideas of churchyard regularities. Some of the levellings of this man, particularly of an ancient cross mentioned by William of Worcester three centuries back, were scourged with a lash much imitating that of Alexander Pope, perhaps the only really existing poet whom he sought to imitate. Praises accorded to him inspired the feeling that if he could meet opportunities entirely favorable, he could become illustrious; and it is touching to note that in this ambition his leading thought was to be able to lift his mother and sister far above their lowly estate. Insufficiently taught in principles of personal rectitude, persuaded that greatest possessions were obtainable mainly through fraud, he commenced that strange career which none but a mind so little instructed could have failed to see must end in disaster. There can hardly be a doubt that insanity, if not born with him, was settling upon his understanding, and that no degree of careful guidance or successful venture would have imparted entire relief.

In his fifteenth year he was apprenticed to John Lambert, an attorney of Bristol, by whom he was set to copying legal documents, an employment that lent many hours of leisure, which he devoted to study in heraldry and Old English. With these he became familiar, and then he began those impostures that were the bane of his short remnant of life. The first of these had for its victim, one Burgum, a pewterer, whose ignorance and vanity exposed him to the lad's designs to obtain money from him by flattery. Like many others in such conditions, the pewterer had eager desire to be thought a descendant of ancestry formerly of high lineage. One day he was told by Chatterton that among the ancient parchments appertaining to Saint Mary Redcliffe, he had discovered one with blazon of the De Bergham arms, and he intimated that from that noble family he, the pewterer, may have descended. The document was made out wholly by Chatterton. Investigation satisfied Burgum fully, and in return for the discovery he gave the boy a crown-piece. This compensation seemed so inadequate that the discoverer afterward celebrated it thus:

"Gods! What would Burgum give to get a name
And snatch the blundering dialect from shame?
What would he give to hand his memory down
To time's remotest boundary? A crown!"

A year afterward, on occasion of the completion of the new bridge over the river Avon, he astonished the whole town by a paper printed in the *Bristol Weekly Journal*, with the signature of "Dunelmus Bristoliensis," which was pretended to have been discovered among those multitudinous papers of the Treasury House, and which gave account of the city mayor's first passage over the old bridge that had been dedicated to the *Assumption of* the Blessed Virgin by King Edward III. and his queen, Philippa. Search for the sender was expedited by his offer of further contributions on the same line, and wonderful was the success attending his devices. No less than the other citizens was misled William Barrett, a learned surgeon and antiquary then engaged upon a history of Bristol. This man, who had been signally kind to the orphan, availed himself freely of his pretended findings, paid for them liberally, and used them in the preparation of his book. What pleased him most was the discovery that Bristol, among other notables two centuries back, had a great poet in the person of Thomas Rowlie, a priest, who, among other things, had written a great poem entitled "The Bristowe Tragedie; or, the Dethe of Syr Charles Bawdin," founded upon the execution of Sir Baldwin Fulford, in 1461, by order of Edward IV. This was indeed a great poem. The muse of tragedy had inspired the young maniac with much of her consuming fervor. The verses containing the intercession of Canynge mayor of Bristol, and his ideas of the chiefest duties of a monarch are among the most touching and noble among their likes in all literature.

As a contributor to the *Town and Country Magazine* he obtained many a shilling, but far less often than what would have satisfied his eager wants, foremost among which was to see his mother and sister established in fine vestments and living in luxury. In time he grew to feel contempt for the Bristol people, high and low, and then he turned his eyes upon London. Application to Dodsley, the leading publisher, was discouraged for want of acquaintance with his condition and responsibility. He then essayed Horace Walpole, sending an ode on King Richard I. for his work "Anecdotes of Painting," and undertaking to furnish the names of several great painters, natives of Bristol. This application was signed "John Abbot of St. Austin's Minster, Bristol." In the letter he drew attention to the "Bristowe Tragedie" and other Rowlie poems. Walpole, who was as cold as urbane, expressed some curiosity to see these productions, which, when sent, he referred to Gray and Mason. These pronounced them forgeries Whereupon Walpole, in the meantime informed of the real author and his condition, paid no further attention to the papers for a while, even to the request to return them. Enraged but undaunted by this failure he continued his work, both in old and contemporary English speech, producing "Aella," "Goddwyn," "Battle of Hastings," "Consuliad," "Revenge," etc. At length he grew restless to a degree beyond endurance. With the few acquaintances of his own age he talked of suicide. Feeling himself a stranger in that society, often spending whole nights in wakeful dreams instead of restful sleep, incensed with limitless ambition, he did indeed meditate upon making an end of himself. Among the papers on his desk one day was found his will, a singular document, containing among other things most incoherent bequests to several acquaintances, as of his "vigor and fire of youth" to George Catcall, the schoolmaster; "his humility" to the Rev. Mr. Camplin; his "prosody and grammar" and a "moiety" of his "modesty" to Mr. Burgum; concluding with directions to Paull Farr and John Flower, "at their own expense" to erect a monument upon his grave with this inscription: "To the memory of Thomas Chatterton. Reader, judge not. If thou art a Christian, believe that he shall be judged by a Supreme Power; to that power alone is he now answerable."

This document led to his dismissal by the attorney, who, in April 1770, returned to him his indentures. He at once set out for London with his manuscripts and a small sum of money raised by a few persons in Bristol. Through the help of a female relative he got board at the house of one Walmsley, a plasterer, in Shoreditch. In the history of literature nothing can be found so much to be compassionated as the life led by him during those summer months in the great city. Plodding the streets from day to day with his manuscripts, living mainly upon bread and water, not retiring to bed at night until near the morning, and then seldom closing his eyes, yet in this time guilty of no sort of known immorality, sending home frequent letters abounding in expressions of most fervid hopes and in promises of silks and other fine things to the objects of his

H. WALLIS PINXIT.

THE DEATH OF CHATTERTON, THE YOUNG POET.

affection, few cases could have appealed more piteously for help. The wits who might have succored were out of town. Goldsmith lamented that he had not known him. Johnson, with his stern kindness, if such a thing had been possible, could have saved him from despair. His deportment in the family with whom he lived was without exception of decorum, although he showed that any movement toward familiarity with him was offensive. In his sore stress he began to write papers upon politics, which were accepted by the partisan press. It was at the time when the arbitrary encroachments of George III. were met by the audacious courage of Mayor Beckford. Chatterton attached himself to the popular side ; yet he seemed to have regret for the mistake in so doing, because of the comparative want of money in that party. In a long letter written to his sister, most of which is occupied with his great undertakings, he spoke thus of his political works :

" But the devil of the matter is, there is no money to be got on this side of the question. Interest is on the other side. But he is a poor author who cannot write on both sides. I believe I may be introduced (and if not I'll introduce myself) to a ruling power in the court party. I might have a recommendation to Sir George Colebrook, an East India director, as qualified for an office by no means despicable ; but I shall not take a step to the sea whilst I can continue on land." In the midst of this struggle Beckford, the champion of popular rights, died suddenly, and the Walmsleys afterward testified that this event put Chatterton "perfectly out of his mind."

Soon after this he removed to Brook Street, Holborn, and became a boarder in the house of one Angell, a sack-maker. Here he continued to work day and night until desperation, long threatened, seized upon him. Court journals grew tired of articles showing little talent for political discussion, and he became ragged and almost shoeless. In the only despondent letter ever sent to his mother, he wrote of having stumbled into an open grave one day while walking in St. Pancras's Churchyard. The Angells, touched with his poverty and distress, kindly offered him food, which, except in one instance, he declined. One night after sitting with the family, apparently given over to despondency, he took affectionate leave of his hostess and the next morning was found dead from a dose of arsenic.

It was singular that the Rowlie writings were so far superior to his productions in modern English. The latter were commonplace, the former indicative of much genius. Indeed, one of the strongest evidences against their genuineness was the moral impossibility of their production in the age to which he assigned them. The imitation was as pathetic as it was audacious, attempted thus in honor of a model that never had existed.

R. M. Johnston

ROBERT BURNS*

By Will Carleton

(1759–1796)

Robert Burns, the great lyric poet of Scotland, was born January 25, 1759, near the sea-coast town of Ayr. His father, William Burness, had all he could do to support a family of children, of whom Robert was the eldest. The boy soon became a stalwart toiler and could turn a furrow and reap a swath with the best of his comrades; but his mind meanwhile grasped strongly and passionately all the literature to which it could get access. This was limited in extent; the books in his father's humble cottage were very few. He devoured, besides, everything in prose and verse that he could buy or borrow; and there were soon aroused in him all the longings of repressed genius and unemployed ambition.

Many of Burns's poems have had music set to them; but he began his rhythmical career by fitting poetry to music. A girl friend often worked beside him in the fields, as was the custom in that locality. She was a beautiful songstress, or at least seemed so to the untutored peasant-boy, and Robert soon learned to put new words to many of her tunes, not forgetting to include in them due commendations of the young lady herself. These efforts naturally received more or less applause; and the youth found his mind more and more drawn toward poetic effort.

His first few years seem to have been spent in a half-happy, half-careless boyhood; in them he had all the experiences of a poor but healthy Scotch peasant-lad, toiling in the fields, catching now and then a few weeks or months at school, coquetting with neighboring lasses, but with poverty and lack of social position always barring the way to his advancement.

Through all this, poetry was his solace and amusement; at the age of fifteen he had written many verses which, although crude, contained the promise of his subsequent career; but of course at that time they were admired only by a limited circle of his neighbors and friends. He also unhappily contracted certain convivial habits, which lasted in a greater or less degree all through his life, which no one regretted more than he did at times, and which greatly impaired and finally put an early end to a brilliant career.

When Robert was twenty-five years old his father, the good William Burness,

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died, and the family, who had kept well together, took a farm about eight miles distant from the old home, near Ayr. Here the young farmer-poet undertook to become a thorough and industrious husbandman. He turned his attention toward the literature of the farm; he tried to bend his powerful though dreamy mind toward the prosaic and the practical. But the venture did not thrive; some of the thousand-and-one casualties that are always besetting crops and crop-growers came his way, and the brave venture which he and his brother Gilbert had undertaken together, proved scant of success.

He, however, may be said to have done the greatest work of his life upon that farm. It was while one day weeding the "kailyard," or garden, with his brother, that he first decided, after they had talked it carefully over, to be an author, and to write verses that would "bear publishing." It is to be noticed that from this hour he became more methodical with his muse and seemed to work toward a purpose; and that within a short time after this resolve he wrote most of the poems that have made his name immortal.

In 1786 it was definitely decided that the farm was not going "to pay," and that his efforts as an agriculturist had failed. But these were not the only troubles that were gathering in the young poet's path. In 1785 he became engaged to his "Highland Mary." If we may judge by his poems, this was the one among his numerous love affairs in which his heart was most deeply enthralled; but there was another in which he was inextricably and fatally entangled. It was with a young girl, Jean Armour, to whom he seems to have been as sincerely attached as his headlong, susceptible nature would allow him to be to anyone. He made the best amends he could to "the bonnie lass" by giving her his written acknowledgment of marriage—a process perfectly legal in Scotland, though irregular—but her father still hoped for a more advantageous alliance for his daughter, and refused her to the poor poet; a sentiment in which the daughter, to all appearances, heartily joined.

It is interesting to think of this poverty-stricken family rejecting Burns, even after matters had gone thus far, on account of his lack of wealth, when he had at that very time, in his little desk, poems for which the world has since paid millions of pounds. But the future is often unseen, even by those highest in learning and deepest in wit; and it is little wonder that the unsophisticated family were unable to know even the pecuniary value of our young ploughman's brain.

Discouraged and depressed the young poet resolved on emigrating to Jamaica, as book-keeper of a wealthy planter. In order to procure the money with which to pay the expenses of his journey, and no doubt partly in pursuance of the plan made that day in the garden, he decided to publish a small volume, by subscription, which he did, at Kilmarnock, in July, 1786, having as the title-page of the book, "Poems, Chiefly in the Scottish Dialect; by Robert Burns." It will be seen that he now dropped the fifth and sixth letters from the name inherited of his father, and the boy Burness became the man Burns.

This book achieved immediate and unexpected success; and having realized a few pounds from its profits, Burns set out for Greenock, where he was to take ship for his new West Indian home. But his poems had attracted so much attention, and had been the cause of such commendation, that he was finally encouraged to stay and enjoy some of the fruits of his genius, which the world was now beginning to discover.

In November of the same year, encouraged by verbal praises and written commendations, some of them all the way from the literary centre of Edinburgh, he journeyed to that city, where he was received with great cordiality by many of the leading people, and urged to issue a second edition of his poems, which he did in April of the ensuing year. It was sold, like the first one, by subscription, and netted the author a much larger sum ; while it procured him fame, all through the country, as "The Ploughman Poet."

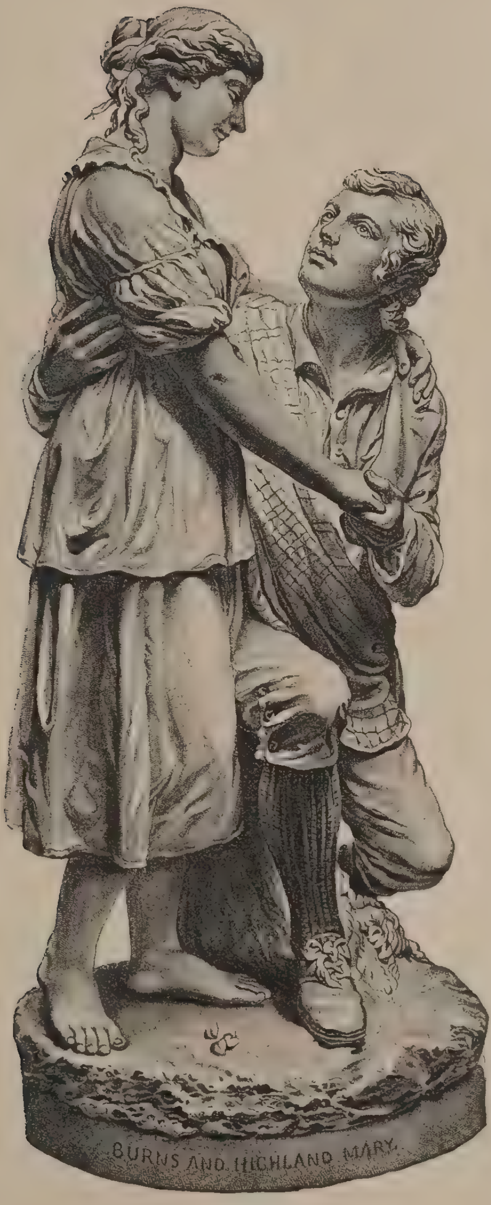
During this year he took several tours in different parts of his native Scotland, in company with congenial spirits, once going a very little way into England. He was received gladly and hospitably everywhere by those who had read and admired his poems. His journals and letters during that period, probably upon the whole the most happy in his life, teem with accounts of courtesies, hospitalities, merry-makings, and gallantries, which he mentions as taking place all along the route. His poetic pen never seems to have remained idle very long at a time ; and albums, fly-leaves, note-books, letters, and sometimes window-panes, received in turn his quaint and fiery verses.

In October he returned to Edinburgh, where he remained for some time, filling social engagements, entangling himself in certain affairs of the heart, and endeavoring to get a settlement with his publisher, whom he considered as owing him the immediate payment of a considerable sum of money. He also assisted a compiler in making collections of old Scottish songs, and in furnishing new words to old airs. It is a singular fact, that while Burns was willing to earn money with the regular edition of his poems, he steadfastly declined remuneration for his songs, claiming that he did the work for love.

With the natural Scotch thrift of his fathers, he soon decided that he must have some more substantial occupation than that of a poet, and he applied for and received a position in the Excise. To add to his income he, in 1788, leased a farm on the river Nith, about twelve miles from Dumfries. The place contained one hundred acres, and was stated to be "more the choice of a poet than of a farmer." Its fine situation and beautiful views compensated, perhaps, in Burns's mind, for its sterility.

Here he brought his wife, Jean Armour, whom he had married under such unpleasant circumstances a few years before, and to whom he was drawn again as much by pity as by love, her parents having turned her out of doors. It is hardly necessary to say that the parents received him with open arms, now that he came with some signs of prosperity ; and he no doubt entered anew upon married life with their sincere, if somewhat tardy, blessing.

Upon this farm of "Ellisland" Burns lived three years, and during that time he had three occupations—farmer, poet, and excise officer. In the last-named he was in the habit of riding two hundred miles per week, to different points


BURNS AND HIGHLAND MARY.

throughout the county. He wrote considerably, but perhaps not so well as if he had not been hurried and worried by practical affairs. As an officer he is generally admitted to have been thorough, correct, and at the same time humane; as a farmer, he again failed, and in 1791 sold back the lease of his place, pocketed, it is said, a loss of £300, and moved with his family to Dumfries. Here he took up the plan of living entirely upon his salary from the Government—£70 per annum. This would seem a meagre stipend now; but it would at that time have enabled Burns to support his family in comfort, though not in the way his abilities entitled him to do. His position gave him some perquisites, and he had the hope of an advance in his salary, which would follow a looked-for promotion to the office of supervisor. He spent his time in the performance of his duties, in collecting and writing songs for the above-mentioned compilation of Scottish melodies, and in meeting and conversing with the many friends whom his genius and geniality drew around him.

But his hopes and his health gradually failed together. Dumfries was on one of the great stage lines that led to and from London, and it was often invaded by tourists who were intent on "making a night of it" with the well-known peasant-poet. In these bouts, in which he was generally willing to recite his poems and sing his songs, he received much pleasure and applause, but nothing else, save the wear and tear of dissipation. His habit of outspoken opinion, in political and other matters, proved obstacles to his advancement in the public service; he fell gradually into debt, despondency, and disease—a mournful trio of companions for the most brilliant of Scottish poets! "An old man before his time," he lay down to die, in 1796, having lived, as time is counted, only thirty-seven short years.

The fame of this great and unfortunate poet has increased since his death; Scotchmen everywhere thrill with pride when Burns's magic name is spoken, and the world in general has a sincere love for the warm-hearted, plain-spoken bard, who turned his own soul to the gaze of his fellow-beings, that they might the better know their own. The space of this article will not permit even an enumeration of his wonderful poems; the world may almost be said to know them by heart. His "Cotter's Saturday Night," "Tam O'Shanter," "Bonnie Doon," "Auld Lang Syne," "Bruce's Address," "A Man's a Man for a' That," and many others that might be named, are likely to live for generation after generation; and his character as a man, although subject in many respects to severe criticism, can always be covered with a mantle of loving charity, when we remember his generosity of heart, his manly independence of spirit, his natural nobility of mind, and consider the difficult circumstances and terrible temptations that encompassed his stormy life.

Will Carleton

SCHILLER*

By B. L. Farjeon

(1759–1805)

It is a common belief, and a common error, that clever children seldom become illustrious, and though we have instances of youthful dullards who have ripened into fame, they are rare in comparison with those who in early youth have given some indications of future renown. Of these last Germany's favorite bard is one. Born in the little village of Marbach, in the duchy of Würtemberg, on November 10, 1759, he, when a child, evinced proofs of remarkable imaginative and creative power. At as early an age as six he showed that he possessed a fearless nature and an inquiring mind. A terrific storm was raging, and his parents searched for him in vain; the vivid lightning and the crashing thunder increased their anxiety, but they could find no trace of the child. At length, when the storm was over, he was seen to descend from the topmost branches of a great lime-tree near the house. They rushed toward him and inquired why he had selected so dangerous a refuge. "I wanted to see," he replied, with an intrepid air, "where all the fire came from." Even at this period he found his favorite reading in the prophetic books of the Old Testament, and it was probably from Ezekiel that he derived his inspiration for Franz Moor's dream in "The Robbers." His mother taught him to read, and the stories she related to him were listened to with avidity; she was his closest companion and friend, and from her he inherited the gifts which made his name a household word in every home in Germany. He was brought up in a religious and scholarly household. Prayers twice a day, regular attendance at church, the study of Greek and Latin already commenced—these were his principal occupations at seven years of age, when other lads were playing about the fields. From his father he also inherited the literary instinct. The elder Schiller, at the time his son was born, was a lieutenant in the service of the dissolute and tyrannical Duke of Würtemberg, and was subsequently appointed governor of the palace of Solitude. He was a struggling man, and often felt the pinch of poverty. Nine books composed his library, among them "Erkenntniss Sein Selbst" and a Würtemberg "Hymnal." During the performance of his duties in Solitude he wrote a treatise on the cultivation of trees, which was very favorably received. Young Schiller's poetic instinct displayed itself on his tenth New-Year, when he greeted his father in German verse, to which he attached a translation in Latin. His taste for the stage also found early vent in the construction of a mimic theatre and cardboard characters, with which he used to play till he was fourteen, when the important question of his

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future education was discussed in family council. His mother wished him to be placed in a private school at Tübingen, and his father was not averse; but the question was decided by the despotic Duke Carl, who insisted that the lad should be educated in the military academy he had established upon his estate, a few miles from Ludwigsburg, and which, two or three years afterward, was transferred to Stuttgart. Thither, therefore, Schiller was sent to study and prepare himself for the battle of life, and it was there he imbibed that contempt for servile obedience to military authority which, in "The Robbers," gave so extraordinary an impetus to revolutionary ideas in his native country, especially in the minds of the young. Slavish discipline was the law in the academy; the scholars wore a military uniform; they were soldiers, and were taught to obey the word of command; the sword and the drum were the symbols of authority; there were stated minutes and hours not only for important duties, but for the smallest observances and pleasures. The drum heralded the pupils to church, summoned them to their meals, announced when they were to begin to play and when to leave off, dismissed them to bed, commanded them to rise.

Schiller writhed under this discipline, which, to those who yielded patiently and uncomplainingly, might have been a death-blow to personal independence. In one of his letters to a young friend he wrote, "Do not imagine that I shall bow to the yoke of this absurd and revolting routine. So long as my spirit can assert its freedom it will not submit to fetters. To the free man the sight of slavery is abhorrent; to calmly survey the chains by which he is bound is not possible. My soul often revolts at the anticipation of punishment in cases where I am satisfied that my actions are reasonable." The masters of the academy had a difficult task to subdue the spirit of such a youth, and it was fortunate for literature that they did not succeed. The poet's wings would not be clipped, and in spite of the restrictions by which he was surrounded, Schiller pursued his imaginative course, and found time to feed upon the poetry he adored. To Klopstock's works he was specially indebted; that poet's "Messiah" and Virgil's "Æneid" may be said to have been the first solid stones in the foundation upon which his fame was to rest. There were, it is true, but slight traces of originality in a poem he wrote at this period, the hero of which was the prophet Moses, and it was due to the religious sentiment by which he was powerfully affected through Klopstock's works, that he chose such a subject. It had been decided that the church was to be his career, but he soon abandoned the idea, and transferred his affections to medicine, which he studied assiduously, without neglecting the groove to which his genius was leading him by slow but sure steps. Gerstenberg's great tragedy, "Ugolino," fell by chance into his hands, and gave him a new impetus; "Goetz von Berlichingen" fascinated him; and then came a revelation from a greater poet than all, Shakespeare, whose works he loved and revered with passionate ardor, and to emulate whom was perhaps the greatest ambition of his life. He was seventeen when he first saw himself in print. He wrote a poem called "Evening," which he sent to Haug's "Swabian Magazine;" it possessed no particular merit, and was chiefly remarkable for its resemblance to the works he had read and admired; but the editor spoke of it in terms of praise, and predicted that its author would become an honor to Germany. He wrote in secret, and was already busy sketching "The Robbers," and writing scenes in that famous drama; he and his young friends used to meet clandestinely and declaim their compositions, concealing their manuscripts when their rooms were searched and inspected by the ushers and masters. He suffered intensely in his friendships, and his letters breathed rather the spirit of a man who had lived to see his fondest idols shattered, than that of a youth who had scarcely reached his spring-time. In his criticisms upon himself he was unsparingly harsh, and long after "The Robbers" had been declared to be a work of the highest genius, he penned the following remarkable condemnation of the play: "An extraordinary mistake of nature doomed me, in my birthplace, to be a poet. An inclination for poetry was an offence against the laws of the institution in which I was educated. For eight years my enthusiasm had to struggle with military discipline; but a passion for poetry is strong and ardent as first love. It only served to inflame what it was designed to extinguish. To escape from things that were a torment to me my soul expatiated in an ideal world; but, unacquainted with the real world, from which I was separated by iron bars—unacquainted with mankind, for the four hundred fellow-creatures around me were but one and the same individual, or rather faithful casts from the same model which plastic nature solemnly disowned—unacquainted with the passions and propensities of independent agents, for here only one arrived at maturity (one that I shall not now mention)—unacquainted with the fair sex, for it is well known that the doors of this institution are not open to females, except before they begin to be interesting and when they have ceased to be so—my pencil could not but miss that middle line between angels and devils, and produce a monster, which fortunately had no existence in the world, and to which I wish immortality merely that it may serve as a specimen of the issue engendered by the unnatural union of subordination and genius. I allude to 'The Robbers.' The whole moral world had accused the author of high treason. He has no other excuse to offer than the climate under which this piece was born. If any of the numberless censures launched against 'The Robbers' be just, it is this, that I had the presumption to delineate men two years before I knew anything about them." He was but twenty-one when The "Robbers" appeared in print and was produced upon the stage, and while he was hailed on all sides as the German Shakespeare, he lived in want and extreme privation.

Duke Carl was deeply incensed by the patriotic and independent sentiments of the poet, and he sent an official mandate to Schiller, ordering him to discontinue all further literary work and composition. To disobey the despotic command and to remain in the Duke's service, would have entailed imprisonment. He resolved upon flight from Solitude, and on the night following that on which "The Robbers" was being enacted for the first time in Hamburg to a crowded and enthusiastic audience, he fled, with a friend, from his fatherland to pursue his eventful and turbulent career. A description of his appearance at this period is extant: "He was cramped into a uniform of the old Prussian cut, that on army surgeons had an even uglier, stiffer look; his little military hat barely covered his crown, behind which hung a long queue, while round his neck was screwed a horse-hair stock several sizes too small. More wondrous, however, was the nether part of him. Owing to the padding of his long, white gaiters, his legs seemed thicker at the calf than at the thigh. Moving stiffly about in these blacking-stained gaiters, with knees rigid and unbent, he reminded one irresistibly of a stork." Freed now by his own bold act from military slavery, Schiller entered Mannheim with joyful hopes. With the manuscript of "Fiesco" under his arm, he called upon the régisseur, Meyer, in whose house he read two acts of the play before a company of actors. His hopes were speedily dashed to the ground; when he finished reading the second act every actor but one had left the room, and Meyer thrust a dagger into the poet's heart by declaring that "Fiesco" was nothing but high-flown rubbish. Having, however, heard but two acts of the play, and probably stirred to compassion by Schiller's mournful countenance, the régisseur requested that the manuscript should be left with him; and the following morning the poet was compensated for the intervening night of misery, by hearing Meyer proclaim that "Fiesco" was a masterpiece, and that the bad effect it had produced was due to the villainous manner in which Schiller had read his verse. Notwithstanding this favorable opinion, which was endorsed by others who read the play, it was with great difficulty that Schiller succeeded in obtaining a publisher for the drama, and then he was in an agony to see the public criticisms upon it. Meanwhile he was working at fever heat on "Marie Stuart" and "Don Carlos." Into this last work he threw all his heart and soul, spurred on, doubtless, by the passion of love, which now for the first time possessed him. The object of his affections was Charlotte von Wolzogen, whom he had met in Stuttgart, and into whose society he was now thrown. He experienced all an ardent lover's joys and tortures. "It is fearful," he wrote, "to live apart from humanity, without some sympathizing soul; yet no less fearful is it to cling to some kindred heart from which, sooner or later, in a world where nothing stands sure, one must wrench oneself, bleeding, away." On January 10, 1784, he was elected a member of the Deutsche Gesellschaft, and on the following day "Fiesco" was produced. Its first representation was but a partial success. It met with more favor on its second performance on the 18th. Its third representation was less favorable, and then it was quietly laid aside. His suit with Charlotte did not prosper, and he relinquished the hope of winning her. He was despondent and in debt. He owed money to Charlotte's mother and to his father; but he struggled on, and in the latter part of the year he issued a prospectus of a new journal, "Thalia," which was to make his fortune—an anticipation which was not realized. The journal was to be published six times a year; philosophy, biography, literary reviews, and dramatic criticisms were to be its leading features; and he threw himself into the task with enthusiasm. The difficulties he encountered were tremendous; these, with his love affairs (for Charlotte von Wolzogen was not the only woman upon whom he set his affections), the labor entailed by

"Thalia," and the numberless ideas for fresh romance with which his brain was teeming, would have broken down most men; but though he repined at reverses, he rose continually superior to them. Long before "Don Carlos" was finished he commenced "The Ghostseer," in which he intended to develop an idea which had originally formed the scheme of "Friedrich Imhof." His life was a kind of fever; with his ardent friendships, his susceptible passions, his pecuniary anxieties, and his fertile brain forever at work, he knew no rest. He had removed to Jena, the capital of Saxe-Weimar, and at that time the literary centre of Germany. The Prince Charles Augustus and his famous mother, the Princess Amalia, made him welcome and encouraged him. A gleam of sunshine now shone upon him; and he saw a prospect of domestic happiness. He fell in love with Charlotte von Lengenfeld, and in 1789 they were engaged. On February 22, 1790, the fond couple were married at the little village church of Wenigen-Jena. It was a simple wedding. "We spent the evening in quiet talk over our tea," wrote Lotte, sixteen years after, when she was a widow. It was a happy union, and the honeymoon was short, for Schiller had no time for idleness. This year he wrote his "History of the Thirty Years' War," and had the satisfaction of hearing it highly praised in influential quarters. He had never enjoyed such happiness as now, his only sorrow in the early months of his marriage arising from a brief separation from his wife, who had to go to Rudolstadt for her mother's birthday.

In one of his letters to her he says, "Your dear picture is ever before me; all seems to speak to me of where the little wife walked, and My Lady Comfort" (Lotte's sister, Caroline) "sat enthroned. And to feel that my hand can always reach what my heart would have near it, to feel that we are inseparable, *that* is a sense which I unceasingly foster in my bosom, finding it exhaustless and ever new." Recognition of his genius came from all sides, from Goethe, Wieland, Körner; and by the press he was hailed as the Shakespeare of Germany He needed some such encouragement, for he was attacked by a dangerous illness, which was aggravated by pecuniary troubles; had it not been for his wife's tender care he could scarcely have recovered, and it was well for him and for his country that there came to him at this crisis an offer from the Hereditary Prince and Count von Schimmelmann, of a thousand thalers per annum for three years, in order that he might obtain the rest needed for his restoration to health. "I am freed for a long time," he wrote joyfully to his dear friend Körner, "perhaps forever, from all care." To the generous donor he said, "I have to pay my debt, not to you, but to mankind. That is the common altar where you lay down your gifts and I my gratitude." The method he adopted to recruit his health was to begin to work again. The French National Assembly conferred upon several celebrated foreigners the right of citizenship, and at this distance of time it is strange to read the name of the German Schiller among them. Though seldom free from suffering, which was frequently so acute that he spoke of it as torture, it was a proof of his indomitable spirit that during his last decade he achieved his most memorable triumphs; and yet, in the height of his powers, his

MES PINXIT.

SCHILLER PRESENTED TO THE PRINCESS OF SAXE-WEIMAR.

youthful dread returned to him, and he expressed a doubt whether he had not mistaken his vocation. The encouragement of Goethe went far to sustain him; between these two great poets existed a warm friendship, and Goethe showed his confidence in Schiller by asking him to correct "Egmont" for the stage. But still he desponded, and it was not till he read Goethe's "Wilhelm Meister" that the full force of poetic fervor awoke within him. "Wallenstein" had been laid aside; he took it up again with glowing feelings; he wrote "The Glove" and "The Ring of Polycrates;" he revised "The Ghostseer" for a new edition; and later on he had the joy of witnessing a masterly performance of the part of Wallenstein by the fine actor, Graff. Following his great dramatic trilogy, "The Camp of Wallenstein," "The Piccolomini," and "The Death of Wallenstein" (the English rights in which he sold to Bell, the publisher, for £60), Schiller now devoted himself to "Mary Stuart" and "Macbeth," and still farther undermined his health by regularly burning the midnight oil. On May 14, 1790, "Macbeth" was performed, and received with tumultuous applause; three days before this performance he had read to the players the first four acts of "Mary Stuart," and when the last and fifth act was written he said to Körner, "I am only now beginning to understand my trade." Following "Mary Stuart," he wrote "The Maid of Orleans," and then he was absorbed in what is perhaps the greatest of his works, "William Tell," the first reading of which took place in Goethe's house on March 6, 1804. On the 9th it was rehearsed at the theatre, and on the very next day he commenced a new drama, "Demetrius, or, The Bloody Bridal of Moscow," thus following out, as indeed he had done throughout the whole of his career, his axiom that life without industry was valueless. "William Tell" was a triumphant success, and may be said to have been the last leaf in his laurel wreath, for he was destined not to live long after this great triumph. On May 9, 1805, he died, at the early age of forty-six, and all Germany mourned the loss. "Dear good one!" he said to his devoted wife, fondling her hand and kissing it the day before his death. It is recorded that in his last hours he spoke of hearing in his dreams the pealing of a bell. It may be that his own beautiful poem, "The Song of the Bell," was in his mind, and that, with the conviction that death was nigh, the fancy was inspired by the lines in his poem:

> "And as the strains die on the ear
> That it peals forth with tuneful might,
> So let it teach that nought lasts here,
> That all things earthly take their flight."

B. L. Farjeon

GOETHE*

By Rev. Edward Everett Hale

(1749–1832)

JOHANN WOLFGANG GOETHE was born on August 28, 1749, at Frankfort-on-the-Main, one of the free cities of Germany. He died in Weimar, in Saxony, at the age of eighty-two, on March 22, 1832.

In any classification of the men of his time it is impossible to rank him, especially, among men of letters generally, or as a poet, or as a naturalist. He is especially what our time is fond of calling "an all-round man." But he differs from most men who are thus praised, because he is the acknowledged leader of the thought of the first half of the century. He does equally well all that he does. If in the year 1850 anyone had asked who was the first poet of the preceding half century, Goethe would have been named by almost all who answered. If you had asked who was the first man of letters, he would have been named by all. It was certain that his philosophy of human life affected the thought of the students and scholarly people of Europe and America more than that of any other author of his time. Indeed, to this hour, many an humble listener or reader receives suggestions, from the pulpit or the newspaper, of which he does not know the origin, but which are in truth born from some suggestion of Goethe.

It is natural to attempt to account for so remarkable a man, in a measure at least, by tracing back his genealogy. Goethe himself gave some attention to the study of his ancestry, and his biographers have worked at it faithfully. But their work gives no confirmation to the doctrines of heredity which are so well supported in other lives. His father, Johann Caspar Goethe, was a respectable member of the city government of Frankfort, with the title of imperial councillor. He had a craving for knowledge, a delight in communicating it, a love of order, and a certain stoicism, which appear in his son. But there is no ray of genius apparent in him. His father was a respectable tailor in the city of Frankfort, named Frederick. Frederick's father was a farrier or blacksmith in Thuringia, named Hans Christian Goethe. In neither of these ancestors is found any germ of the poet's genius.

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On the other hand, the successful life of Wolfgang von Goethe is one more instance, in a large number afforded in the history of the last two centuries, which show that a good education under prosperous circumstances, with the appliances which tend to health of body, mind, and soul, is a very fortunate help to native genius, when native genius finds itself in such surroundings. In the imperial councillor's house his son had every comfort. He was surrounded by pictures books, medals, and other works of art. His reasonable wishes could all be gratified. And he knew none of the hardships which, if they are sometimes the stimulus of genius, more often make its penance.

To his mother he seems to have owed more of the qualities which have made him distinguished. He says himself that his love of story-telling came from her, and his happy disposition. She taught him how he could find the good which is in everyone, and her own habit was to leave people's vices to the God who made them. Much more than this, Goethe had at home the blessing, which cannot be overestimated, of the presence of a sister who shared in his tastes, who joined in his studies, and whom he loved with a passionate affection. He could pour out his enthusiasms to her ; she poured out hers to him. So that both of them were blessed through their childhood in that greatest of blessings, a happy home.

He was a precocious boy, and his father and mother both observed his remarkable abilities. There was no lack of good teachers in Frankfort, and he was well trained in the classics in early life. He also studied Hebrew at the same time, having the advantage of the instruction of learned Jews who lived in Frankfort. There never was any question but that he should go to the university. His father's wish was that he should enter upon the career of what he would have called jurisprudence. With this view some of the younger Goethe's earlier studies were conducted. But, before he was old enough to take any very decided steps in the profession of law, his determination to follow a wider literary career became so evident that the plan of jurisprudence was eventually entirely abandoned.

When he was sixteen years old he went to Leipsic, and entered at the university there, in the month of October, 1765. The university was classed in the "Four Nations," as they were called—the Misnian, the Saxon, the Bavarian, and the Polish. Goethe was from Frankfort, and was classed as a Bavarian. His father left him wide freedom in the choice of subjects and teachers, and though he attended some lectures which bore on subjects of jurisprudence, he was more interested in the wider range of natural science and of general literature. It would seem that he learned more from the people around him in whose society he was intimately thrown than from his professors. He tried his hand in fine art, occupied himself in drawing, and even in engraving. Although the three years spent in Leipsic show but little which is remarkable in any scientific course of study, it is quite clear that he laid foundations here which were of use to him in all his future life. But at the end of three years his health was seriously affected. He was depressed in hypochondria, and was physically ill. He was "destitute of faith, yet terrified at scepticism," and he returned to his home in 1768, discouraged and physically broken down.

But a year and a half of the regularity of home life, quite different from his Bohemian courses at the university—a life inspired by his mother's and his sister's love—and a physical life sustained by a home diet which was so much better than a student's fare, wholly restored him, and in April, 1770, he went to the University of Strasburg, not far from Frankfort, now with the real purpose of studying jurisprudence. He was nearly twenty-one years old, in stature rather above the middle size, and because his presence was imposing he was generally spoken of as tall; but he was not really a tall man, but gave this impression by his erect carriage and because his bust was large. Long before he was celebrated, he was called an Apollo.

At Leipsic he had led the life of a boy. At Strasburg he knew men and entered on the interests of a man. Herder was there, whose reputation as a man of letters and a scholar, in after times, was to be in that great second class which would have been the first class but that there Goethe reigned alone. Herder was at Strasburg to undergo an operation for the benefit of his eyes. Goethe made his acquaintance, which ripened into friendship, and Herder's influence on the young Apollo was of the very best. Goethe remained in Strasburg from April, 1770, till August, 1771. He made the acquaintance of Frederike Brion, whose father was pastor of the little village of Sesenheim. Frederike was a fair, sweet girl of sixteen, and Goethe was for the time deeply interested in her; but she was to him little more than a child, and when he left Strasbourg she was soon forgotten. But she never forgot, and years after died unwedded. Goethe was now writing, with the versatility and the enthusiasm which marked all his literary work. Something or somebody acquainted him with the history of Goetz von Berlichingen, a name then little known, to which this young student has given its distinction.

We do not understand Goethe nor the enthusiasm with which Germany welcomed his earliest printed work, if we do not see how it was connected with the hatred of conventionalism and of mere authority, which in the German language was called *Sturm* und *Drang*.* In after life Goethe had none too much of enthusiasm for radical reformers. But as a young man, he breathed the atmosphere of his time. In the same way, in the year 1773, Schiller, a boy only fourteen years old, was writing verses which in 1778 he wrought into "The Robbers," appealing to all the enthusiasm for liberty in young Germany.

In the years which we are following, the young men of America were solving the political questions and preparing for the military struggles of the American Revolution. France was in the glow of hope which made even Louis XVI. himself suppose that a golden age was come again for Frenchmen. In England the protest against form and authority showed itself in signs as easily read as the letters of Junius and the Wilkes riots in London. The autocracy attempted by poor George III., in an attempt which cost him America, was only the most

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* No one has translated this phrase well into English. Mrs. Humphry Ward suggests "storm and stress." *Drang* is the origin of our word *throng*, and implies the pressure, rush, and common purpose of a crowd.

KAULBACH PINXIT.

GOETHE AND FREDERIKE.

absurd imitation of the despotism of Louis XIV. In Germany, the revolt against the traditions of the past showed itself in the new outburst of national literature. Young men were sick of the sway of France and the French language, to which Frederick even had been so subservient. In all senses Frederick was now a very old lion—and there were those who said he had lost his teeth. To be German, to write and read German, to recall German memories, and to throw off conventional restraints of whatever kind—such was the drift and determination of the movement which received the excellent title of the "Sturm und Drang."

Soon after Goethe left Strasburg he printed his play of "Goetz von Berlichingen." The hero is a true character of history. He was born about the year 1480 and died in 1562. His life had been published in 1731, and Goethe made the drama on the lines of the true history. The play defies all the "unities" of the French drama, like the plays of Shakespeare, whom all the young Germans were reading with enthusiasm; and the action passes from place to place, and from year to year, just as the author chooses. The whole tendency of the drama is revolutionary, and as *Goetz* dies, his last words are: "Freedom! Freedom!" His wife cries, "Only above, above with thee! The world is a prison-house." His sister says, "Gallant and gentle! Woe to this age that has lost thee!" And the last words of the play are: "And woe to the future that cannot know thee."

With such an appeal to all the fresh young life of Germany, the young author comes before the world. His play is received with enthusiasm and, at the first step, his genius is recognized by his countrymen.

Before it was published, he had returned to Frankfort, having in a way satisfied his father's wishes by his legal studies, and his career for his future calling is to begin in a residence at Weslar. This was the seat of the Court of Appeal of the old German Empire. How far justice was really promoted, may be seen from the single statement that, while the docket of cases was twenty thousand behindhand in 1772, only sixty decisions were made in a year. In what was called praxis or practice, the young Goethe was placed in a "circumlocution office" like Weslar. There is something ludicrous in the position, so absurd is it. To take Schiller's capital figure, it is indeed Pegasus in harness.

It happened that in this formal residence, he became intimately acquainted with Charlotte Buff and a young man named Kestner, to whom she was betrothed. They were fond of him, he of them, and he shared in the hospitalities of their new home after they were married. In the simple life of Kestner and Charlotte Buff and in the suicide of a young man named Jerusalem, whom they all knew, he found the details for the picture of life described in his celebrated novel called the "Sorrows of Young Werther," the novel most remarkable perhaps of modern times, if its influence on literature and society be regarded.

In the characters of the book, Werther, Lotte, and Albert show traits which were at once recognized as belonging to Goethe, Charlotte Buff, and Kestner. But it must not be understood that the intricate "elective affinities" of the novel really describe the personal relations of the three. To young readers it may be said that the transfer of the scientific term "elective affinity," from the new chemistry of that time, to the language of the affections, was first made in this book. It was afterward dwelt upon in the novel called "Elective affinities." The phrase has long since been used, now in ridicule and now seriously, quite as much in discussions of the working of the human heart as to express the relations of acids and alkalies.

It would be very hard to persuade the young people of to-day to read "The Sorrows of Werther." It would be hard to make them understand that for a generation of men, from 1774, when it was published, until this century was well advanced, people of sense and real feeling regarded it as a central and important book, which they valued because it had awakened them and given them strength. The English critics, when at last they found there was such a book, were content to laugh at its exaggerated sentiment. In truth, as Carlyle has well said, "'Werther' expressed the dim-rooted pain under which thoughtful men were languishing." Europe responded to "Werther," because, even in its sentimental languishing, it expressed this pain. America was finding another method of expressing her dissatisfaction in 1774. And it may be doubted whether from that day to the end of the century, a copy of the "Sorrows of Werther" was heard of in the United States, unless indeed the Baroness Riedesel soothed with it the more physical sorrows of the bivouacs of Saratoga, or the barracks of her captivity.

"Goetz von Berlichingen" and "Werther" made the young Goethe one of the foremost men in German literature. That theory of his boyhood, that he was to be a lawyer or jurisconsult, could be maintained no longer even by his father. The distinguished men of letters of Germany made his acquaintance, and it may be said that their company lifted him, very fortunately, from the petty society of persons inferior to him, among whom he was a dictator. As early as 1774 Goethe had conceived the idea of "Faust," and when Klopstock visited him at Frankfort, in that year, Goethe read to him some fragments of that poem.

The popularity of "Werther" was such that it was read by people of all ranks. Among the rest, the young Duke of Saxe-Weimar, Karl August, then only nineteen years old, conceived a great admiration for Goethe, and in 1774, on a visit to Frankfort, with his bride, he invited the young author to his little court at Weimar. Johann Goethe, the father, had the pride of a magistrate of a free city, and had no fancy for a part so poor as that which Voltaire had played, within his memory, at the court of King Frederick. But the office was tempting to the young author, and he accepted the invitation. This ended in his receiving from the duke a home at Weimar and recognized position. To those who study the inducements and encouragements of authorship, it is interesting to know that through all the success, before the public and with the booksellers, of "Goetz von Berlichingen" and "Werther," neither book had paid back to Goethe the money he had spent for their publication. Fame, and fame only, had been, thus far, his reward.

He went to Weimar as the friend of its young sovereign, who was just entering on a career which may fairly be called illustrious. Weimar was and is "more like a village bordering a park than a capital with a court, having all courtly environments." The representation it gave of the formalities, the "fuss and feathers" of a court, was on the most minute scale. But with a certain pride, well understood, a German historian has said, that after Berlin there is no one of the countless courts of Germany of which the nation is so proud. Such pride is born from the distinction which this grand duke, Karl August, gave to it, by calling into what was called his service, such men as Klopstock, Wieland, Goethe, and Schiller. This grand duke was himself a remarkable man for one "in his unfortunate position." He now owes all the place he has in history to the fortunate decision by which he offered to Goethe a home in the little city of Weimar, when he was himself a boy.

After a gay, not to say wild, introduction to the little social circle of this funny little court, Goethe settled down quite seriously to the work which belonged to a member of the administration. He had accepted the post of Counsellor of the Home Department, with a seat in the council. This carried with it a yearly salary of about nine hundred of our dollars. And in the modest habits of that little court this seems to have been regarded as a competency. With this income it is certain that Goethe kept house, fulfilled the demands which etiquette made on his position, and remitted a sixth part of his money to a poor, broken-winded, and apparently worthless author, whose very name is unknown, who maintained with him a begging correspondence.

Goethe proved himself a thorough man of business in the discharge of his official duties. His interest in science made him study the administration of the mines of the duchy with care and in detail, and when, afterward, he gave up other official cares, he retained the administration of the Department of the Mines. To persons studying his style it is worthy of remark, that the best habits of a man of affairs may be noted all through his work, whether scientific, speculative, poetical, or indeed, in whatever form it takes. There is never anything which a critic of our time would call "gush," or "padding," or "slip-slop." He advances on his purpose, whatever that purpose is, with the directness of an engineer pressing the attack of a fortress, or of an architect making the specifications for a building.

Meanwhile, for the relaxation or diversion of life, there was a passion, more or less real, which bound him to the Baroness von Stein, the wife of the Master of the Horse; there was the direction of the theatre and music of the court, and occasional journeys, generally incognito, with the Duke Karl August. A favorite entertainment was in private theatricals, which were indeed the rage in the little circle. The duchess acted, and everybody, even of the highest rank, was glad to be enrolled in the troupe, which was directed by Goethe. Eager for the applauses of other audiences than the favored circle at Weimar, the company went about, almost like a troupe of gypsies, from one to another of the country homes of the neighborhood. In all our modern ridicule of the Duchy of Pompernickel, and the like, it is hard to find anything more absurd than these accounts of the best way which the leaders of the state found for the occupation of their time, and for the edification of their people. The private theatricals of this court, however, will be long remembered, because the rollicking experiences of these parties, which were a sort of picnics in a courtly style, give the framework, or machinery for the story of "Wilhelm Meister."

This famous and remarkable book was begun soon after Goethe went to Weimar. But it was not published until 1795, after Goethe had spent more than a year in Italy, a period which marked a crisis in his life. In ten months' hard study of painting in Rome, he satisfied himself, at last, that he should never be a painter. It seems strange now to say, that until then, he had diligently nursed the hope that as a painter he should achieve great success. In Italy he looked at the petty court of Weimar from a point distant enough to see it in its true relations and perspective. He measured his own powers as a man does who is removed from the petty detail of small official duty. And he returned to Weimar in 1788, determining wisely to give the rest of his life to science and literature. The "determination" proved to be a determination. And from this time, his life as a master of the thought of his time may be said to begin.

He had received from the grand duke a title of nobility, and from that time he is "von Goethe," instead of "Goethe" simple, without that prefix of dignity. On his return from Italy he gave up all his official work, except the direction of the mines and of the theatre. It is interesting to remember that Goethe thus directed the work of the mines in which Luther's father had been a workman. His interest in natural science made him hold this position; and his charge of the theatre was almost a matter of course in such a court as that of Weimar. He was, however, relieved from the presidency of the council and from the direction of the War Department. The duke retained for him a place in the council "whenever his other affairs allowed him to attend." It must be remembered that all such appointments were made wholly at the wish of the duke, who was the absolute monarch of this little state, until he gave to his people a liberal constitution in 1816.

It will be convenient to American readers to remember that the size of the duchy is about the same as that of the State of Rhode Island—about fourteen hundred square miles. In Goethe's time, the population was less than a million. The city of Weimar had about ten thousand inhabitants. To Weimar Goethe returned, resolved to give his life, from that time forward, to science and literature. Before the Italian journey he had done so in large measure. But after his return, relieved from almost all duties of administration, he brings forward finished works, with untiring enthusiasm, on many different lines, many of which are among the masterpieces of the time. Schiller had come to Weimar in 1794. Goethe and he had met before. There were differences between these men so great that in some lines they had no sympathy. All the more is it to the credit of both, that each appreciated the other and that they lived and worked together as friends. When Schiller proposed the literary journal called *The Hours*, Goethe co-operated in the plan most cordially. And so long as Schiller lived, their friendship was to each a great blessing. Their statues, representing them hand in hand, commemorate this friendship to this day.

The closing books of "Wilhelm Meister" were written in Italy, and after Goethe's return, and the book was published in 1795. Goethe had long since outlived the extravagance of sentimentalism which overflowed in "Werther." He had himself ridiculed it in a little farce, much laughed at at the time. And if "Wilhelm Meister" were taken merely as a story, it would be found quite free from such extravagances. The story, however, is simply the framework for criticism on art, on literature, and especially for what may be called studies on education. The criticism on "Hamlet" has been called the best of the thousands upon thousands of which "Hamlet" has been the subject. No book of Goethe's has had, or has held, the interest of the great world of "general readers," as "Wilhelm Meister," "Faust" not excepted.

"Hermann and Dorothea" appeared in 1797, and was one of the most serious of the efforts by which Goethe and Schiller both gave themselves to create a German drama worthy of the German people. In 1790 a new theatre had been built at Weimar, and Goethe became in fact the manager. He was not satisfied with writing plays to be performed there: he actually supervised the performances, and gave to the detail of such management much of his time for many years. So long as Schiller lived the two were closely connected in all such enterprises, and Goethe's practical connection with the theatre led him, perhaps, to attempt the dramatic form of composition more often than he would otherwise have done.

In 1799 Walter Scott, then only twenty-five years of age, published in Edinburgh his translation of "Goetz von Berlichingen."

It must be remembered that all this time Goethe is pursuing his studies of Physical Science. His little book called "Morphologie," published in 1788, immediately after his return from Italy, is a simple, unaffected, practical, statement of the law of growth of plants, which, though suggested before, had quite escaped the attention of the botanists of repute. When it was published, it seems to have been pushed aside as the fanciful dream of a poet. In truth, it is a book which might be given to-day to a learner, as one of the most elegant and simple illustrations of what is now meant by evolution in nature. From the humble resources of a common garden Goethe finds material to show how whorls of leaves appear as blossoms; how calyx passes into corolla; how leaves of the corolla become stamens and pistils. After a generation the botanists were willing enough to accept the statement, and Goethe lived long enough to see it accepted as the foundation of the Botanical Science of his time.

The critics are apt to call "Faust" his greatest work. The first part was published in 1805, the second in 1831. Quite too much *finesse* has been wasted on endeavors to discover his purpose in the poem. It will live, not from any discovery of his purpose, but because of the intensity with which it presents the different characters. It will command and control men all the more, because they do not find in it the skeleton of what is called an artistic or scientific literary plan. It is impossible, in the limited range of this article, even to name the several works, many of them of great importance, of the last half of his life. With his assiduous industry, so assiduous that he was never satisfied, perhaps, unless he was at work, he edited an art journal, *Kunst und Alterthum*, from 1816 to 1828. In a thousand methods of publication he sent out poems, dramas, novels, and pamphlets. He had the satisfaction of knowing that Europe and America regarded him as the first author of his time.

Goethe married, in 1806, Christiana Vulpius, who had been employed as a servant in his family. She died in the year 1816. He seems to have really lamented her death.

His old age was serene. The jubilee of his arrival in Weimar was celebrated with great enthusiasm, on November 7, 1825. All through the last years of his life he was receiving tokens of admiration from all parts of the world. They gratified his vanity, and satisfied his pride.

He died on March 22, 1832. His last words have been well remembered. "More light!"

Edward E Hale

SIR WALTER SCOTT

By W. C. Taylor, LL.D.

(1771–1832)

SCOTT IN CHILDHOOD.

The life of an author who took no active part in public affairs, but sent forth from his own fireside those marvels of imagination which have afforded delight and instruction to millions, furnishes interest of a different kind from the biographies of those whose names are associated with great events. We look more to the man than to his age; we endeavor to trace the circumstances by which his mind was moulded and his tastes formed, and we feel anxious to discover the connection between his literary and his personal history and character. There have been few authors in whose career this connection was more strongly apparent than in Sir Walter Scott; his life is, to a great extent, identified with his writings, and this appears to be the source of that feeling of truth and reality which is forced upon us while perusing his fictions. He was born at Edinburgh, August 15, 1771. His father was one of that respectable class of attorneys called, in Scotland, writers to the signet, and was the original from whom his son subsequently drew the character of Mr. Saunders Fairford, in "Redgauntlet." His mother was a lady of taste and imagination. An accidental lameness and a delicate constitution procured for Walter a more than ordinary portion of maternal care, and the influence of his mother's instructions was strongly impressed on his character. In early childhood he was sent for change of air to the country seat of his maternal grandfather, where he first developed his extraordinary powers of memory by learning the traditionary legends of border heroism and chivalry, which used to be recited at the fireside on a winter's evening. His early taste for the romantic was a little checked when he returned to Edinburgh, in his eighth year, for his father was rather a strict adherent to forms, and looked upon poetry and fiction as very questionable indulgences. The discovery of a copy of Shakespeare, and an odd volume of Percy's "Relics," enabled him to resume his favorite pursuits, though the hours he devoted to them were stolen from sleep. He was sent at an early age to the high-school of Edinburgh, but was not particularly distinguished in the regular course of study. His companions, however, soon discovered his antiquarian tastes, and his passionate love for old tales of chivalry and old chronicles scarcely less romantic; he became noted, too, for reciting stories of his own invention, in which he introduced a superabundance of the marvels of ancient superstition, with a plentiful seasoning of knight-errantry. He even pursued his favorite subject into the continental languages, and by his own exertions enabled himself to peruse the works of Ariosto and Cervantes in their original form.

After a brief residence at the university he was indented as an apprentice to his father in 1786. Though the daily routine of drudgery in an attorney's office must have been painful to a young man of ardent imagination, he did not neglect any of the tasks which his father imposed, and he thus formed habits of method, punctuality, and laborious industry, which were important elements of his future success. But in the midst of these duties he did not lose sight of the favorite objects of his study and meditation. He made frequent excursions into the lowland and highland districts in search of traditionary lore; his investigations led him to the cottage of the peasant as frequently as to the houses of the better class, and his frank manners secured him a favorable reception from all.

In 1792 he changed his profession for that of an advocate, but did not obtain much practice at the Scottish bar. His first publication was a translation from the German; Bürger's wild romantic ballads captivated his youthful imagination, and his version of them proved that he entered deeply into the spirit of the original. Soon afterward he contributed some pieces to Lewis' "Tales of Wonder," which are almost the only fragments of that work which have escaped oblivion. At last, in 1802, he gave to the world the two first volumes of his "Border Minstrelsy," printed by his old schoolfellow, Ballantyne; its literary merits were enhanced by the beauty of its typographical execution, and its appearance made an epoch in Scottish literary history. The ballads of this collection had been very carefully edited, while the notes contained a mass of antiquarian information relative to border life, conveyed in a beautiful style, and enlivened with a higher interest than poetic fiction. This work at once obtained an extensive sale, and its popularity was increased by the appearance of the third volume, containing various imitations of the old ballad by Mr. Scott, in which the feelings and character of antiquity were faithfully preserved, while the language and expression were free from the roughness of obsolete forms. The copyright of the second edition was sold to the Messrs. Longman for £500, but the great extent of the sale made the bargain profitable.

Three years elapsed before he again took the field as an author; but the poem which he then produced, at once placed him among the great original writers of his country. "The Lay of the Last Minstrel" was a complete expansion of the old ballad into an epic form. "It seemed," says Prescott, "as if the author had transferred into his page the strong delineations of the Homeric pencil, the rude but generous gallantry of a primitive period, softened by the more airy and magical inventions of Italian romance, and conveyed in tones of melody such as had not been heard since the strains of Burns." Its popularity was unprecedented, and its success determined the course of his future life.

Scott's position enabled him to encounter the hazards of literary life with comparative safety. He held two offices, that of Sheriff of Selkirk, and Clerk of the Court of Sessions, which yielded him a competent income. He received some accession to his fortune on his marriage, and the tastes of his lady prevented her from indulging in any of the extravagance of fashionable life. Domestic happiness and rural retirement were favorable to literary exertion. He soon produced a second poem, "Marmion," which many critics prefer to all his other poems. It was, however, rather harshly attacked in the *Edinburgh Review* on its first appearance, which the author felt keenly, as he had been himself a contributor to that journal. This was the origin of the *Quarterly Review*, which was established mainly in consequence of his exertions. About the same time he established a new *Annual Register*, and became a silent partner in the great printing establishment of the Ballantynes. This last step involved him in grievous embarrassments, but it stimulated him to exertions such as none but a man of his prodigious powers could attempt. His biographical, historical, and critical labors, united with his editorial toils, were of appalling magnitude, but in all his works he proved himself to be vigorous and effective. "Poetry," he says in one of his letters, "is a scourging crop, and ought not to be hastily repeated. Editing, therefore, may be considered as a green crop of turnips or peas, extremely useful to those whose circumstances do not admit of giving their farm a summer fallow."

The "Lady of the Lake" was his next poem; it appeared in 1811, and soon outstripped all his former productions in fame and popularity. More than fifty thousand copies of it were sold, and the profits of the author exceeded two thousand guineas. It may be noticed as a curious proof of the effect it produced on the public mind, that the post-horse duty rose to an extraordinary degree in Scotland, from the eagerness of travellers to visit the localities described in the poem. He was now at the zenith of his fame. The sale of his next poem, "Rokeby," showed that his popularity had declined, and when this was followed by the comparative failure of the "Lord of the Isles," he resolved to abandon the field of poetry, and seek for fame in another form of composition.

Ten years before this period he had commenced the novel of "Waverley," and thrown the manuscript aside; having accidentally discovered the unfinished romance amid the old lumber of a garret, he completed it for the press in 1814, and published it anonymously. Its appearance created a greater sensation and marks a more distinct epoch in literary history than that of his poetry. It was the great object of his ambition to become a land-owner and to hold a high rank, not among the literary characters, but the country gentlemen of Scotland, and this was one of the causes of his being anxious to keep the authorship of his novels a profound secret. The same ambition stimulated him to exertion. He produced in rapid succession "Guy Mannering," "The Antiquary," "Rob Roy," and the "Tales of my Landlord" in three series, and at the same time published several pieces in his own name to increase the mystification of the public. But his incognito was soon detected; long before he avowed his romances, the world generally had found out his secret; indeed, when he was created a baronet in 1820, it was universally understood that this honor was conferred on him as author of the Waverley Novels.

It is not necessary to enumerate all the fictions that emanated from the brilliant imagination of the Northern Enchanter; the list would be too long, but we must not omit to notice the energy with which he labored. Even illness, that would have broken the spirits of most men, as it prostrated the physical energies of Scott, opposed no impediment to the progress of his compositions. When he could not write he could dictate; and in this way, amid the agonies of a racking disease, he composed "The Bride of Lammermoor," "The Legend of Montrose," and a great part of the most fascinating of his works, "Ivanhoe." Never, certainly, did mind exhibit so decisive a triumph over physical suffering. "Be assured," he remarked to Mr. Gillies, "that if pain could have prevented my application to literary work, not a page of 'Ivanhoe' would have been written. Now, if I had given way to mere feelings and ceased to work, it is a question whether the disorder would not have taken deeper root and become incurable."

The crowds of visitors that flocked to his baronial mansion at Abbotsford, from all quarters, greatly added to the expenses which the hospitable owner had to meet; but the unbounded popularity of his novels appeared to him and to his publishers a never-failing source of funds; and the Messrs. Constable accepted his drafts, to the amount of many thousand pounds, in favor of works which were not only unwritten, but even unimagined. Unfortunately, Scott, in return, could not refuse to indorse the drafts of his publishers, and thus an amount of liabilities was incurred which would appear quite inexplicable, if experience had not shown that the dangerous facilities of accommodation bills lead men on to an extent that they never discover until the crash comes. In the great commercial crisis of 1825 Constables' house stopped payment; the assets proved to be very trifling in comparison with the debts, and Sir Walter Scott was found to be responsible to the startling amount of one hundred thousand pounds!

His conduct on this occasion was truly noble; he put up his house and furniture in Edinburgh to auction, delivered over his personal effects—plate, books, furniture, etc.—to be held in trust for his creditors (the estate itself had been settled on his eldest son when he married), and bound himself to discharge annually a certain amount of the liabilities of the insolvent firm. He then, with his characteristic energy, set about the performance of his herculean task. He took cheap lodgings, abridged his usual enjoyments and recreations, and labored harder than ever. The death of his beloved lady increased the gloom which the change of circumstances produced, but though he sorrowed he did not relax his exertions. One of his first tasks was the "Life of Bonaparte," which he completed in the short space of thirteen months. For this he received from the publishers the sum of £14,000, and such was its great circulation that they had no reason to repent of their bargain. In the same year that this work appeared, he took an opportunity of publicly avowing his authorship of the Waverley Novels, declaring "that their merits, if they had any, and their faults were entirely imputable to himself."

Sir Walter Scott's celebrity made everything that he produced acceptable to the public. He did not allow these favorable impressions to fade for want of exercise, and the list of the works, great and small, which he produced to satisfy his creditors, is an unexampled instance of successful labors. No one of these enterprises was so profitable as the republication of his novels in a uniform series, with his own notes and illustrations. It was not given to Sir Walter Scott to see the complete restoration of his former position; his exertions were too severe and pressed heavily on the springs of health, already deprived by age of their elasticity and vigor. In the short space of six years he had, by his sacrifices and exertions, discharged more than two-thirds of the debt for which he was responsible, and he had fair prospects of relieving himself from the entire sum. But in 1831 he was seized with a terrible attack of paralysis, to which his family had a constitutional tendency, and he was advised to try the effect of a more genial climate in Southern Europe. The British Government placed a ship at his disposal to convey him to Italy; and when he came to London, men of every class and party vied with each other in expressing sympathy for his sufferings and hopes for his recovery.

In Italy he was received with the greatest enthusiasm, and under the influence of its sunny skies he seemed, for a while, to be recovering. But his strength was gone, his heart was in his own home at Abbotsford, and, almost an imbecile, he returned there. He died September 20, 1832.

SIR W. ALLAN PINXIT.

SIR WALTER SCOTT AT ABBOTSFORD.

The following letter was written by him to his son Walter, in 1819, soon after the young man had entered the army. It illustrates at once his strong affections and his knowledge of the world.

"DEAR WALTER.

". . . I shall be curious to know how you like your brother officers, and how you dispose of your time. The drills and riding-school will, of course, occupy much of your mornings for some time. I trust, however, you will keep in view drawing, languages, etc. It is astonishing how far even half an hour a day, regularly bestowed on one object, will carry a man in making himself master of it. The habit of dawdling away time is easily acquired, and so is that of putting every moment either to use or to amusement.

"You will not be hasty in forming intimacies with any of your brother officers, until you observe which of them are most generally respected and likely to prove most creditable friends. It is seldom that the people who put themselves hastily forward to please are those most worthy of being known. At the same time you will take care to return all civility which is offered, with readiness and frankness. The Italians have a proverb, which I hope you have not forgot poor Pierrotti's lessons so far as not to comprehend—'*Volto sciolto e pensieri stretti.*' There is no occasion to let any one see what you exactly think of him; and it is the less prudent, as you will find reason, in all probability, to change your opinion more than once.

"I shall be glad to hear of your being fitted with a good servant. Most of the Irish of that class are scapegraces—drink, steal, and lie like the devil. If you could pick up a canny Scot it would be well. Let me know about your mess. To drink hard is none of your habits, but even drinking what is called a certain quantity every day hurts the stomach, and by hereditary descent yours is delicate. I believe the poor Duke of Buccleuch laid the foundation of that disease which occasioned his premature death in the excesses of Villar's regiment, and I am sorry and ashamed to say, for your warning, that the habit of drinking wine, so much practised when I was a young man, occasioned, I am convinced, many of my cruel stomach complaints. You had better drink a bottle of wine on any particular occasion, than sit and soak and sipple at an English pint every day.

"All our bipeds are well. Hamlet had an inflammatory attack, and I began to think he was going mad, after the example of his great namesake, but Willie Laidlaw bled him, and he has recovered. Pussy is very well. Mamma, the girls, and Charlie join in love. Yours affectionately,

"W. S.

"P.S.—Always mention what letters of mine you have received, and write to me whatever comes into your head. It is the privilege of great boys when distant, that they cannot tire papas by any length of detail upon any subject."

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

(1770–1850)

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH, the poet, was born at Cockermouth, on the Derwent, in Cumberland, on April 7, 1770. His parentage offers a curious parallel to Scott's; he was the son of an attorney, law-agent to the Earl of Lonsdale, a prosperous man in his profession, descended from an old Yorkshire family of landed gentry. On the mother's side, also, Wordsworth was connected with the middle territorial class; his mother, Anne Cookson, was the daughter of a well-to-do mercer in Penrith; but her mother was a Crackanthorpe, whose ancestors had been lords of the manor of Newbiggin, near Penrith, from the time of Edward III. He was thus, as Scott put it in his own case, come of "gentle" kin, and, like Scott, he was proud of it, and declared the fact in his short fragment of prose autobiography. The country squires and farmers whose blood flowed in Wordsworth's veins were not far enough above local life to be out of sympathy with it, and the poet's interest in the common scenes and common folk of the North Country hills and dales had a traceable hereditary bias.

Though his parents were of sturdy stock, both died prematurely, his mother when he was five years old, his father when he was thirteen, the ultimate cause of death in his mother's case being exposure to cold in "a best bedroom" in London; in his father's, exposure on a Cumberland hill, where he had been befogged and lost his way. At the age of eight Wordsworth was sent to school at Hawkshead, in the Esthwaite Valley, in Lancashire. His father died while he was there, and at the age of seventeen he was sent by his uncle to St. John's College, Cambridge. He did not distinguish himself in the studies of the university, and for some time after taking his degree of B.A., which he did in January, 1791, he showed what seemed to his relatives a most perverse reluctance to adopt any regular profession. His mother had noted his "stiff, moody, and violent temper" in childhood, and it seemed as if this family judgment was to be confirmed in his manhood. After taking his degree he was pressed to take holy orders, but would not; he had no taste for the law; he idled a few months aimlessly in London, a few months more with a Welsh college friend, with whom he had made a pedestrian tour in France and Switzerland, during his last Cambridge vacation ; then, in November of 1791, he crossed to France, ostensibly to learn the language, made the acquaintance of revolutionaries, sympathized with them vehemently, and was within an ace of throwing in his lot with the Brissotins, to give them the steady direction that they needed. When it came to this his relatives cut off his supplies, and he was obliged to return to London toward the close of 1792. But still he resisted all pressure to enter any of the regular professions, published "An Evening Walk" and "Descriptive Sketches," in 1793, and in 1794, still moving about to all appearance in stubborn aimlessness among his friends and relatives, had no more rational purpose of livelihood than drawing up the prospectus of a periodical of strictly republican principles, to be called *The Philanthropist.* At this stage, at the age of twenty-four, Wordsworth seemed to his friends a very hopeless and impracticable young man.

But all the time from his boyhood upward a great purpose had been growing and maturing in his mind. Nature was little more than a picture-gallery to him ; the pleasures of the eye had all but absolute dominion ; and he

"Roamed from hill to hill, from rock to rock,
Still craving combinations of new forms,
New pleasures, wide empire for the sight,
Proud of her own endowments, and rejoiced
To lay the inner faculties asleep."

But, though he had not yet found his distinctive aim as a poet, he was inwardly bent, all the time that his relatives saw in him only a wayward and unpromising aversion to work in any regular line, upon poetry as "his office upon earth."

In this determination he was strengthened by his sister Dorothy, who with rare devotion consecrated her life henceforward to his service. A timely legacy enabled them to carry their purpose into effect. A friend of his, whom he had nursed in a last illness, Raisley Calvert, son of the steward of the Duke of Norfolk, who had large estates in Cumberland, died early in 1795, leaving him a legagy of £900. And here it may be well to notice how opportunely, as De Quincey half-ruefully remarked, money always fell in to Wordsworth, enabling him to pursue his poetic career without distraction. Calvert's bequest came to him when he was on the point of concluding an engagement as a journalist in London. On it and other small resources he and his sister, thanks to her frugal management, contrived to live for nearly eight years. By the end of that time Lord Lonsdale, who owed Wordsworth's father a large sum for professional services, and had steadily refused to pay it, died, and his successor paid the debt with interest. His wife, Mary Hutchinson, whom he married in 1802, brought him some fortune ; and in 1813, when, in spite of his plain living, his family began to press upon his income, he was appointed stamp-distributor for Westmoreland, with an income of £500, afterward nearly doubled by the increase of his district. By this succession of timely godsends, Wordsworth, though he did not escape some periods of sharp anxiety, was saved from the necessity of turning aside from his vocation.

To return, however, to the course of his life from the time when he resolved to labor with all his powers in the office of poet. The first two years, during which he lived with his self-sacrificing sister at Racedown, in Dorset, were spent in half-hearted and very imperfectly successful experiments—satires in imitation of Juvenal, the tragedy of "The Borderers," and a poem in the Spenserian stanza, the poem now entitled "Guilt and Sorrow." How much longer this time of doubtful, self-distrustful endeavor might have continued is a subject for curious speculation; an end was put to it by a fortunate incident, a visit from Coleridge, who had read his first publication, and seen in it, what none of the public critics had discerned, the advent of "an original poetic genius. It would be impossible to exaggerate the importance for Wordsworth of the arrival of this enthusiastic Columbus. Under his sister's genial influence he was groping his way doubtfully out of the labyrinth of poetic conventions, beginning to see a new pathos and sublimity in human life, but not yet convinced, except by fits and starts, of the rightness of his own vision. Stubborn and independent as Wordsworth was, he needed some friendly voice from the outer world to give him confidence in himself. Coleridge rendered him this indispensable service. He read to his visitor one of his experiments, the story of the ruined cottage, afterward introduced into the first book of "The Excursion." Coleridge, who had already seen original poetic genius in the poems published before, was enthusiastic in his praise of them as having "a character by books not hitherto reflected," and his praise gave new heart and hope to the poet, hitherto hesitating and uncertain.

June, 1797, was the date of this memorable visit. So pleasant was the companionship on both sides that, when Coleridge returned to Nether Stowey, in Somerset, Wordsworth, at his instance, changed his quarters to Alfoxden, within a mile and a half of Coleridge's temporary residence, and the two poets lived in almost daily intercourse for the next twelve months. During that period Wordsworth's powers rapidly expanded and matured; ideas that had been gathering in his mind for years, and lying there in dim confusion, felt the stir of a new life and ranged themselves in clearer shapes under the fresh, quickening breath of Coleridge's swift and discursive dialect. The radiant restless vitality of the more variously gifted man stirred the stiffer and more sluggish nature of the recluse to its depths, and Coleridge's quick and generous appreciation of his power gave him precisely the encouragement that he needed.

It is interesting to compare with what he actually accomplished, the plan of life-work with which Wordsworth finally settled at Grasmere, in the last month of the eighteenth century. The plan was definitely conceived as he left the German town of Goslar, during a trip on the Continent, in the spring of 1799. Tired of the wandering, unsettled life that he had led hitherto; dissatisfied also with the fragmentary, occasional, and disconnected character of his lyrical poems, he longed for a permanent home among his native hills, where he might, as one called and consecrated to the task, devote his powers continuously to the composition of a great philosophical poem on Man, Nature, and Society. The poem was to be called "The Recluse." He communicated the design to Coleridge, who gave him enthusiastic encouragement to proceed. In the first transport of the conception he felt as if he needed only solitude and leisure for the continuous execution of it. But, though he had still before him fifty years of peaceful life amid his beloved scenery, the work in the projected form at least was destined to remain incomplete. Doubts and misgivings soon arose, and favorable moments of felt inspiration delayed their coming. To sustain him in his resolution he thought of writing as an introduction, or, as he put it, an antechapel to the church which he proposed to build, a history of his own mind up to the time when he recognized the great mission of his life. It appears from a letter to his friend, Sir George Beaumont, that his health was far from robust, and in particular that he could not write without intolerable physical uneasiness. We should probably not be wrong in connecting his physical weakness with his rule of waiting for favorable moments. His next start with "The Prelude," in the spring of 1804, was more prosperous; he dropped it for several months, but, resuming again in the spring of 1805, he completed it in the summer of that year. But still the composition of the great work to which it was intended to be a portico proceeded by fits and starts. It was not till 1814 that the second of the three divisions of "The Recluse," ultimately named "The Excursion," was ready for publication; and he went no further in the execution of his great design.

We shall speak presently of the reception of the "The Excursion." Meantime, we must look elsewhere for the virtual accomplishment of the great design of "The Recluse." The purpose was not, after all, betrayed; it was really fulfilled, though not in the form intended, in his various occasional poems. In relation to the edifice that he aspired to construct, he likened these poems to little cells, oratories, and sepulchral recesses; they are really the completed work, much more firmly united by their common purpose than by any formal and visible nexus of words. Formally disconnected, they really, as we read and feel them, range themselves to spiritual music, as the component parts of a great poetic temple, finding a rendezvous amid the scenery of the district where the poet had his local habitation. The Lake District, as transfigured by Wordsworth's imagination, is the fulfilment of his ambition after an enduring memorial. The Poems, collected and published in 1807, compose in effect "a philosophical poem on Man, Nature, and Society," the title of which might fitly have been "The Recluse," "as having for its principal subject the sensations and opinions of a poet living in retirement." As a realization of the idea of "The Recluse," these poems are, from every poetical point of view, infinitely superior to the kind of thing that he projected and failed to complete.

The derisive fury with which "The Excursion" was assailed upon its first appearance has long been a stock example of critical blindness, conceit, and malignity. And yet, if we look at the position now claimed for "The Excursion" by competent authorities, the error of the first critics is seen to be not in their indictment of faults, but in the prominence they gave to the faults, and their generally disrespectful tone toward a poet of Wordsworth's greatness. Jeffrey's petulant "This will never do," uttered, professedly, at least, more in sorrow than in anger, because the poet would persist, in spite of all friendly counsel, in misapplying his powers, has become a byword of ridiculous critical cocksureness. But the curious thing is that "The Excursion" has not "done," and that the Wordsworthians who laugh at Jeffrey are in the habit of repeating the substance of his criticism, though in more temperate and becoming language.

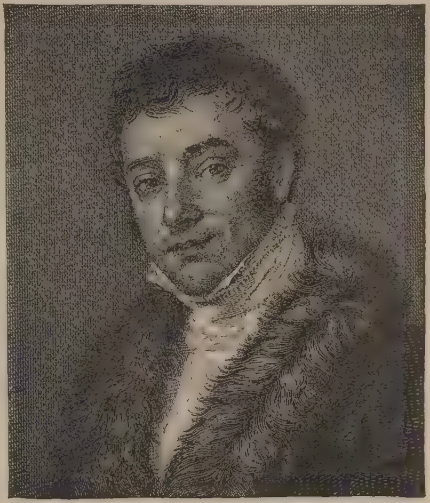
There can be little doubt that adverse criticism had a depressing influence on Wordsworth's poetical powers, notwithstanding his nobly expressed defiance of it, and his determination to hold on in his own path undisturbed. Its effect in retarding the sale of his poems, and thus depriving him of the legitimate fruits of his industry, was a favorite topic with him in his later years; but the absence of general appreciation, and the ridicule of what he considered his best and most distinctive work, contributed in all probability to a still more unfortunate result—the premature depression and deadening of his powers. He schooled himself to stoical endurance, but he was not superhuman, and in the absence of sympathy not only was any possibility of development checked, but he ceased to write with the spontaneity and rapture of his earlier verse. His resolute industry was productive of many wise, impressive, and charitable reflections, and many casual felicities of diction, but the poet very seldom reached the highest level of his earlier inspirations.

Wordsworth was appointed poet-laureate on the death of Southey, in 1843. His only official composition was an ode on the installation of the prince consort as chancellor of Cambridge University, in 1847. This was his last writing in verse. He died at Rydal Mount, after a short illness, on April 23, 1850, and was buried in Grasmere Churchyard.

WASHINGTON IRVING

(1783–1859)

Washington Irving, the first American who obtained a European reputation merely as a man of letters, was born at New York, April 3, 1783. Both his parents were immigrants from Great Britain, his father, originally an officer in the merchant service, but at the time of Irving's birth a considerable merchant, having come from the Orkneys and his mother from Falmouth. Irving was intended for the legal profession, but his studies were interrupted by an illness necessitating a voyage to Europe, in the course of which he proceeded as far as Rome and made the acquaintance of Washington Allston. He was called to the Bar upon his return, but made little effort to practice, preferring to amuse himself with literary ventures. The first of these of any importance, a satirical miscellany entitled "Salmagundi," written in conjunction with his brother William and J. K. Paulding, gave ample proof of his talents as a humorist. These were still more conspicuously displayed in his next attempt, "Knickerbocker's History of New York" (1809). The satire of "Salmagundi" had been principally local, and the original design of "Knickerbocker's History" was only to burlesque a pretentious disquisition on the history of the city in a guide-book by Dr. Samuel Mitchell. The idea expanded as Irving proceeded, and he ended by not merely satirizing the pedantry of local antiquaries, but by creating a distinct literary type out of the solid Dutch burgher whose phlegm had long been an object of ridicule to the mercurial Americans. Though far from the most finished of Irving's productions, "Knickerbocker" manifests the most original power and is the most genuinely national in its quaintness and drollery. The very tardiness and prolixity of the story are skilfully made to heighten the humorous effect. The next few years were unproductive. Upon the death of his father, Irving had become a sleeping partner in his brother's commercial house, a branch of which was established at Liverpool. This, combined with the restoration of peace, induced him to visit England in 1815, when he found the stability of the firm seriously compromised. After some years of ineffectual struggle it became bankrupt. This misfortune compelled Irving to resume his pen as a means of subsistence. His reputation had preceded him to England, and the curiosity naturally excited by the then unwonted apparition of a successful American author procured him admission into the highest literary circles, where his popularity was insured by his amiable temper and polished manners. As an American, moreover, he aroused no jealousy and no competition, and stood aloof from the political and literary disputes which then divided England. Campbell, Jeffrey, Moore, Scott were counted among his friends, and the last-named zealously recommended him to the publisher Murray, who, after at first refusing, consented (1820) to bring out "Geoffrey Crayon's Sketch-book," which was already appearing in America in a periodical form. The most interesting part of this work is the description of an English Christmas, which displays a delicate humor not unworthy of the writer's evident model, Addison. Some stories and sketches on American themes contribute to give it variety; of these Rip Van Winkle is the most remarkable. It speedily obtained the greatest success on both sides of the Atlantic. "Bracebridge Hall," a work purely English in subject, followed in 1822, and showed to what account the American observer had turned his experience of English country life. The humor is, nevertheless, much more English than American. "Tales of a Traveller" appeared in 1824, and Irving, now in comfortable circumstances, deter-



mined to enlarge his sphere of observation by a journey on the Continent. After a long course of travel he settled down at Madrid, in the house of the American consul, Rich. His intention at the time was to translate Navarrete's recently published work on Columbus. Finding, however, that this was rather a collection of valuable materials than a systematic biography, he determined to compose a biography of his own by its assistance, supplemented by independent researches in the Spanish archives. His work appeared in 1828 and obtained a merited success. It is a finished representation of Columbus from the point of view of the nineteenth century, affecting neither brilliancy nor originality, but a model of tasteful elegance, felicitous in every detail and adequate in every respect. "The Companions of Columbus" followed; and a prolonged residence in the south of Spain gave Irving materials for two highly picturesque books, "The Conquest of Granada," professedly derived from the MSS. of an imaginary Fray Antonio Agapida, and "The Alhambra." Previous to their appearance he had been appointed secretary to the embassy at London, an office as purely complimentary to his literary ability as the legal degree which he about the same time received from the University of Oxford. Returning to the United States in 1832, after seventeen years' absence, he found his name a household word, and himself universally honored as the first American who had won for his country recognition on equal terms in the literary republic. After the rush of *fêtes* and public compliments had subsided, he undertook a tour in the Western prairies, and returning to the neighborhood of New York built for himself a delightful retreat on the Hudson, to which he gave the name of Sunnyside. His acquaintance with the New York millionaire, John Jacob Astor, prompted his next important work, "Astoria," a history of the fur-trading settlement founded by Astor in Oregon, deduced with singular literary ability from dry commercial records, and, without labored attempts at word-painting, evincing a remarkable faculty for bringing scenes and incidents vividly before the eye. "Captain Bonneville," based upon the unpublished memoirs of a veteran hunter, was another work of the same class. In 1842 Irving was appointed ambassador to Spain. He spent four years in the country, without this time turning his residence to literary account; and it was not until two years after his return that Forster's "Life of Goldsmith," by reminding him of a slight essay of his own which he now thought too imperfect by comparison to be included among his collected writings, stimulated him to the production of his own biography of his favorite author. Without pretensions to original research, the book displays an admirable talent for employing existing material to the best effect. The same may be said of "The Lives of Mahomet and his Successors," published two years subsequently Here, as elsewhere, Irving has correctly discriminated the biographer's province from the historian's, and leaving the philosophical investigation of cause and effect to writers of Gibbon's calibre, has applied himself to represent the picturesque features of the age as embodied in the actions and utterances of its most characteristic representatives. His last days were devoted to a biography of Washington, undertaken in an enthusiastic spirit, but which the author found exhausting and his readers tame. His genius required a more poetical theme, and indeed the biographer of Washington must be at least a potential soldier and statesman. Irving just lived to complete this work, dying of heart disease at Sunnyside, on November 28, 1859.

Although one of the chief ornaments of American literature, Irving is not characteristically an American author. Like most of the transatlantic writers of his generation, he disappointed expectation by a scrupulous conformity to acknowledged European standards. The American vine had not then begun to produce the looked-for wild grapes. Irving, however, is one of the few authors of his period who really manifests traces of a vein of national peculiarity which might under other circumstances have been productive. "Knickerbocker's History of New York," although the air of mock solemnity which constitutes the staple of its humor is peculiar to no literature, manifests, nevertheless, a power of producing a distinct national type. Had circumstances taken Irving to the West and placed him amid a society teeming with quaint and genial eccentricity, he might possibly have been the first Western humorist, and his humor might have gained in depth and richness. In England, on the other hand, everything encouraged his natural fastidiousness; he became a refined writer, but by no means a robust one. At the same time he is too essentially the man of his own age to pass for a paler Addison or a more decorous Sterne. He has far more of the poet than any of the writers of the eighteenth century, and his moralizing, unlike theirs, is unconscious and indirect. The same poetical feeling is shown in his biographies; his subject is invariably chosen for its picturesqueness, and whatever is unessential to portraiture is thrown into the background. The result is that his biographies, however deficient in research, bear the stamp of genuine artistic intelligence, equally remote from compilation and disquisition. In execution they are almost faultless; the narrative is easy, the style pellucid, and the writer's judgment nearly always in accordance with the general verdict of history. They will not, therefore, be easily superseded, and indeed Irving's productions are in general impressed with that signet of classical finish which guarantees the permanency of literary work more surely than direct utility or even intellectual power. This refinement is the more admirable for being in great part the reflection of his own moral nature. Without ostentation or affectation, he was exquisite in all things, a mirror of loyalty, courtesy, and good taste in all his literary connections, and exemplary in all the relations of domestic life which he was called upon to assume. He never married, remaining true to the memory of an early attachment blighted by death.

JAMES FENIMORE COOPER*

By President Charles F. Thwing

(1789–1851)

In the churchyard of Christ's Church, in the town bearing his name, in the State of New York, rests all that is mortal of James Fenimore Cooper. It is now more than two score of years since he died. The spot is marked by a simple slab of marble. In the public cemetery of Cooperstown stands a noble monument to Leather Stocking. It is crowned with a figure of this immortal character. The personality of Cooper himself must, like the human body, gradually fade away; but certain personalities which he brought into literature are lasting. Cooper the man dies; Cooper the novelist lives.

Cooper the man and Cooper the author are singularly united and yet singularly distinct. His boyhood was spent in scenes which figure in his novels, and certain of the novels seem in certain respects to be only the projection of early experiences through which he passed or of which he constantly heard. Yet there are many qualities manifest in his writings which do not seem to belong to his personality and many elements exhibited in his personality which are not suggested by his stories.

Born in Burlington, N. J., September 15, 1789, he was taken, at the age of about a year, to that part of the State of New York which has since become lastingly associated with his life and work. His early home was one of a considerable degree of affluence. His father, near the close of the Revolution, had become possessed of large tracts of land about the sources of the Susquehanna, and on the borders of the endless forests of Central New York the Cooper family established a home. In this wilderness James Fenimore Cooper spent his boyhood. This settlement was not unlike the ordinary new settlements which are, at various stages of their history, found in many of the States of the American Union. It was picturesque in the richness and diversity of the gifts of nature. Game abounded in water and wood. The years he here lived deeply affected his character and influenced his career. It is reported that in later life he said "he might have chosen for his subject happier periods, more interesting events, and possibly more beauteous scenes, but he could not have taken any that would lie so close

* Copyright, 1894, by Selmar Hess.

to his heart."* Apparently the education of books and of formal teachers was less influential than the education of nature. In the schools of Cooperstown and under the tuition of the rector of St. Peter's Church, Albany—a graduate of an English university—and at Yale College, he received whatever of intellectual training he received in his youth. A frontier town, however, offered few facilities in education, and his career at New Haven was cut short in the midst by his dismission for some sort of a college frolic, and even while he was at Yale he confesses that he played the first year and did not work much the rest of the time. The discipline he received, however, from his English master at Albany seems to have been one of the formative factors of his early life.

In the autumn of 1806, at the age of seventeen, Cooper found himself a seaman before the mast in the ship Sterling, endeavoring to secure the training necessary for entering the United States Navy; for to this career it was decided he should devote himself. His entrance to the navy as midshipman in 1808, his marriage to a Miss De Lancey at Mamaroneck, Westchester County, N. Y., in 1811, his retirement from the navy a few months after his marriage, and a somewhat migratory life distinguished by a "gentlemanly" and unprofitable pursuit of agriculture for eight years, represent the chief facts and conditions of his career from the age of nineteen to the age of thirty. Describing the last years of this period Professor Lounsbury says: "His thoughts were principally directed to improving the little estate that had come into his possession. (His father died in 1809.) He planted trees, he built fences, he drained swamps, he planned a lawn. The one thing which he did not do was to write."

On November 10, 1820, in New York, was published a novel in two volumes, bearing the title "Precaution." Its author was James Fenimore Cooper. He was thirty-one years old. He had had no special literary training. But this novel was the beginning of the career of one of the most prolific of American authors. Accident brought this career to this apparently rather unsuccessful man. Reading to his wife one day a novel dealing with English society, and displeased by it, he made the remark, "I believe I could write a better story myself." His wife challenged him; the challenge he accepted; the book followed.

There were no novelists at the close of the second and the beginning of the third decade of our century. Hawthorne was a shy youth fitting for college. John P. Kennedy, by whose side Cooper appears in the picture of Washington Irving and his friends, was entering the Maryland House of Delegates, and twelve years were to elapse before the issue of his story of Virginia country life, "Swallow Barn." Irving and Paulding were writing sketches. Charles B. Brown was dead. Cooper was alone as a novelist.

Destiny thus found Cooper rather than Cooper his destiny. In the next thirty years he wrote no less than seventy books, or important review articles, and not a few of the books were published in two volumes. So prolific a power of authorship is unique enough, and when considered in the light of the absence of literary associations of the first half of his life seems absolutely unique in the history of men of letters. It is, of course, in and through this latter half of his life that Cooper, both as a man and as an author, made his contribution to the common possessions of mankind.

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* "James Fenimore Cooper," by Thomas R. Lounsbury, page 5. To this, the only biography of Cooper, and an admirable work, the writer acknowledges his great obligations. On his death-bed Cooper instructed his family to publish no life of himself.

The larger part of this period he lived in either New York or Cooperstown. Seven years of it (1826–1833), however, were spent in Europe with his family. The whole of it was, till at least the last years, a pretty stormy time to Cooper personally, as well as a busy one in his writing. From the memory of most people now living the recollection of the lawsuits in which Cooper became involved has faded. They were about as numerous as the books he wrote, and they were of an irritating character which would have wearied out a man less bold and enduring. Of this sort of defence and offence he had had a foretaste during his European residence, when he was often called on to defend his native country from an ignorant and depreciative criticism, which was sixty years ago far more common than now. But he who was the defender of his country when abroad, seems to have become the severe critic of his country when at home. "Condescension in foreigners" is bad enough, but condescension in a native who has lived abroad is far worse. On returning Cooper found an America, as he believed, vastly deteriorated. Morals had become base; manners coarse; commerce fallen into speculation. He was not the man to keep his sentiments locked up in his heart. He wrote, and wrote with fulness and severity of his country and of his countrymen. Thurlow Weed, in 1841, wrote of him: "He has disparaged American lakes, ridiculed American scenery, burlesqued American coin, and even satirized the American flag." He also was so foolish as to reply to certain adverse criticisms made on "The Bravo," and in seeking to bring down the lightning on the head of his reviewer, he brought down both thunder and lightning on his own head and about his ears. It must be added, too, that he did not live at peace with his neighbors. Discussion and litigation as to a piece of land which the people of Cooperstown believed had been given by Cooper's father for public uses was peculiarly exasperating. The citizens, in a public meeting, resolved, "That we recommend and request the trustees of the Franklin Library, in this village, to remove all books of which Cooper is the author from said library." That Cooper was legally right did not at all lessen the bitterness. He attacked the newspapers and the newspapers attacked him. Libel suits followed, which, too, he usually won. Criticism of his "History of the United States Navy" aroused his indignation, and a trial which is a *cause célèbre* was the result. A time of storm all these years were for Cooper.

All this gives the impression of a man who was constantly "spoiling for a fight." The impression is hardly just, however. He was not quarrelsome; but he was proud, possessed of strong passions and of a deep sense of his own rights. Whenever, therefore, what he regarded as his rights were struck at, he struck back. For one blow received another was given, till what was simply a continued litigation seemed to be his normal condition. But these troublesome scenes have to be read in the books, and are not lingering in the minds of his few remaining contemporaries.

In this period he was constantly engaged in writing. Not only was the number of volumes he produced great, but the variety of subject and treatment was no less great. He even wrote a drama. Yet it is to his novels that one turns as the most precious result of these years. Cooper is, above all other Americans, the writer of the novel of adventure. In his own day, at home and abroad, he was often called the American Scott. The metaphor is true in several senses, besides the one point of both the American and the Scotchman standing for the story of objective life and daring. Like Scott, Cooper wrote a tremendous amount; like Scott, he wrote with great rapidity; like Scott, he burdened his books with long introductions; like Scott, he was careless in literary expression; like Scott, too, into the novel of adventure he put a mighty literary power. It must be said that, unlike the Waverley Novels, Cooper's romances have little of development, and that to the cultivated reader Scott is more attractive. One cannot forbear saying that the women of Cooper's creation are far inferior to Scott's —they are women usually narrow in knowledge, weak in brain and heart, and gentle, if not even insipid, in character. They are as proper as well-draped statues, and almost as lifeless. When Cooper, however, passes from this point of weakness to nature herself, he shows himself a master. His descriptions of nature represent his finest work, and are among the finest to be found anywhere. His sea tales are properly named; they are rather tales of the sea than tales of seamen. The closer, too, is the association of his characters with the scenes of nature the more life-like are they. No one has painted the Indian character, with all its varieties of intellectual and emotional contrasts, with its honor and shame, its tenderness and its severity, as has the author of "The Last of the Mohicans." No one has created a character in American fiction more original, more certain of immortality, or combining more elements worthy of the novelist's best skill than Leather-Stocking.

Among his many stories is large range of excellence. It is usually considered that of his sea tales "The Red Rover" is the best, the product of his early career, and that of the Indian stories "The Pathfinder" and "The Deerslayer" represent his highest achievement, as they are the work of the last years. But in thus distinguishing certain books, no one can forget that in "The Spy," his second work, or "The Pioneers," or "The Pilot," or "The Last of the Mohicans," Cooper has written books which are among the most popular and most powerful of their kind.

James Fenimore Cooper, both as a man and as an author, has entered largely into American life and literature. He was thoroughly human. He was strong, and strength with eccentricities—and Cooper had these—is more attractive and moving than mild weakness attended by the graces of propriety. He was proud without vanity; a good hater, yet beloved to devotion in his home; severe, yet holding himself to a high standard of justice; of mighty passions, yet also of mighty will for their control; loyal to what he would esteem right principle; patriotic though the severest critic of his country; a Puritan in character though condemning the Puritan character of New England; frank, fearless, truthful. He lacked tact, and for the lack he paid the penalty of obloquy; there was little of the compromising or conciliatory in his nature. But he had what men of tact are in peril of lacking—the heroic qualities of mind and heart and will and conscience. He was a faithful husband, a loving father. So scrupulously careful was he of the interests of his children that his own daughter says she was not permitted to read her father's books before she was eighteen. His influence is ever in favor of simple truth and simple righteousness. As Mr. James Russell Lowell says: "I can conceive of no healthier reading for a boy, or girl either, than Scott's novels, or Cooper's, to speak only of the dead. I have found them very good reading, at least, for one young man, for one middle-aged man, and for one who is growing old. No, no—banish the Antiquary, banish Leather-Stocking, and banish all the world! Let us not go about to make life duller than it is."

Charles F Thwing

WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT*

By Richard Henry Stoddard

(1794–1878)

The life of William Cullen Bryant covers what to me is the most interesting period in the history of American letters. We cannot be said to have had a literature when he was born (certainly nothing worthy of the name), and if we have one now, we owe whatever is of value therein to three or four writers, among whom he will always stand first. We were waiting for it, as the English were waiting for a new-growth in their literature, and it came at last, though later to us than to them. The same seed blossomed in both countries, only it was native there, being first sown in "Percy's Reliques," while here it was transplanted at second-hand from the pages of a new race of English poets, particularly Wordsworth. They returned to nature in literature; we, who had no literature, discovered it in nature. That both the English and ourselves have gone astray after other gods is certain, but all is not lost yet; Greek atheism will no more satisfy them forever, than the "barbaric yawp" of the rough will satisfy us.

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* Reprinted by permission, from Appletons' Journal.

William Cullen Bryant was born at Cummington, Mass., on November 3, 1794. He was happy in his parentage, his father, who was a physician, being a studious and thoughtful man, while his mother was a woman of strong understanding. The infant poet is said to have been remarkable for an immense head, which was not pleasing in the sight of his father, who ordered him to be ducked every morning in a spring near the house. He resisted the treatment, as what child of tender years would not? but to no purpose—he was predestined to be ducked. Whether the cold water arrested the cerebral development, we are not told, but it strengthened his frail *physique*, and made him a hardy little lad. He began early to write verses, a pursuit in which he was encouraged by his father, who directed him to what were then considered the best models, taught him the value of correctness of expression and condensation of statement, and pointed out the difference between true and false eloquence in verse. The father of Pope is said to have performed the same good offices for his rickety little son: "These be good rhymes, Alexander;" or the reverse, when his couplets were unfinished. Allibone states that Master Bryant's first effusions were translations from some of the Latin poets, but, as these were written and printed in his tenth year, the account is scarcely credible. He began at ten years of age to write verses (says another authority), which were printed in the Northampton newspaper of that day —the *Hampshire Gazette*.

When he was fourteen he had verse enough on hand to make a little pamphlet volume, which was published (we are not told where) in 1808. A second edition, corrected and enlarged, was brought out at Boston in the ensuing year. It was entitled "The Embargo; or, Sketches of the Times—a Satire," and is described as being a reflection, in heroic measure, of the anti-Jeffersonian Federalism of New England. "If the young bard," said the Aristarchus of the *Monthly Anthology* for June, 1808; "if the young bard has received no assistance in the composition of this poem, he certainly bids fair, should he continue to cultivate his talents, to gain a respectable station on the Parnassian mount, and to reflect credit on the literature of his country." Besides the "Embargo," the volume contained an "Ode to Connecticut," and a copy of verses entitled "Drought," written in his thirteenth year.

In 1810 the young poet entered Williams College, a sophomore, and remained two years. He is said to have distinguished himself greatly, and we can readily believe it. We can believe anything of the youth who conceived "Thanatopsis." When this noble poem was written is variously stated; one account says in 1812, and another 1813. It is of no great consequence, however, whether Bryant was eighteen or nineteen at the time. No other poet ever wrote so profound a poem at so early an age. In whatever light we consider it, "Thanatopsis" is without a parallel in the history of literature. The train of thought it awakens is the most universal with which the soul of man can be touched, belonging to no age and no clime, but to all climes and ages, and embracing all that pertains to him on earth. It is his life-hymn and his death-anthem. It is mortality. Poets from immemorial time have brooded over life and death, but none with the seriousness and grandeur of this young American. There are moments in the life ot man when he stands face to face with nature, and sees her as she is, and himself as he is, and the relation of everything in the universe. Such a moment is fixed for all time in "Thanatopsis."

It would be interesting to know what authors the youthful student read with most avidity and attention. The influence of Pope is visible in "The Embargo," as the influence of Wordsworth is visible in "Thanatopsis." But between the writing of these poems—a space of four or five years—other poets than those named must have stimulated his thoughts and colored his style. Cowper, we imagine, was one, and Akenside, perhaps, another. He may have read Scott, and Southey, and Coleridge, although there are no traces of either in anything that he has written. That Wordsworth was more to him at this period than any other English poet, we have the testimony of the elder Dana. "I shall never forget," he writes, "with what feeling my friend Bryant, some years ago, described to me the effect upon him of his meeting for the first time with Wordsworth's ballads. He lived, when quite young, where but few works of poetry were to be had; at a period, too, when Pope was still the great idol of the Temple of Art. He said that, upon opening Wordsworth, a thousand springs seemed to gush up at once in his heart, and the face of nature, of a sudden, to change into a strange freshness and life." Wordsworth may have been the master of Bryant, but it was only as Ramsay was the master of Burns, and Chaucer of Keats, and Keats himself of Tennyson. That is to say, the disciple found in the master a kindred spirit. The eyes with which Bryant looked on nature were his own. Wordsworth never imparted to him "the vision and the faculty divine." It should be observed, also, that he was favorably situated in his youth; not like so many poets, in the heart of a great city, but in the quiet of the country, amid green fields and woods, in sight of rivers and mountains, and beneath a sky which was nowhere obstructed by man. The scenery around Cummington is said to be beautiful, and, immediately around the Bryant homestead, of a rich pastoral character. It haunted him like a passion from the beginning, and appeared again and again in his poetry, always with a fresh and added charm.

After leaving Williams College, Mr. Bryant studied law, first with Judge Howe, of Washington, and afterward with Mr. William Baylies, of Bridgewater. Admitted to the bar at Plymouth in 1815, he practised one year at Plainfield, and then removed to Great Barrington, where, in 1821, he married Miss Frances Fairchild. Of this lady, who survived until within a few years, there are several graceful and touching memorials in the poetry of her husband. She was the ideal celebrated in the poem beginning, "Oh, fairest of the rural maids;" and it is to her that "The Future Life" and "The Life that Is" are addressed. Whether Mr. Bryant was a successful lawyer, we are not told; but, as he lived at Great Barrington nine years in the practice of law, it is to be supposed that he was. However this may be, he still cultivated his poetry, which was now bringing him into notice. "Thanatopsis" was published in 1816 in the *North*

American Review, though not precisely as we have it now; as was also the "Inscription for the Entrance to a Wood"—a study from nature, at Cummington, and the well-known lines "To a Water-fowl," which were written while he was studying his profession at Bridgewater.

The next four or five years of Mr. Bryant's life were comparatively unproductive; at least, we hear of nothing from his pen until 1821, when he delivered "The Ages" before the Phi Beta Kappa Society at Cambridge. It was published there during the same year, at the suggestion of some of his friends, in a little volume which contained, in addition to the three poems already mentioned, the pleasant pastoral, "Green River," previously contributed to Dana's "Idle Man." That law had by this time become distasteful to him, we gather from its concluding stanza:

"Though forced to drudge for the dregs of men,
And scrawl strange words with the barbarous pen."

In 1824 we find him writing for the *Literary Gazette*, a favorite weekly published at Boston, and edited by Theophilus Parsons. His contributions to this journal were "The Murdered Traveller," "The Old Mans' Funeral," "The Forest Hymn," and the spirited lyric "March." The next year he removed to New York, and became one of the editors of the *New York Review and Athenæum Magazine*. It was the wisest step that he could have taken, although New York, at that time, was of less importance in the literary world than Boston or Philadelphia. The *Review* was not a success, so it was merged, in 1826, in a work of similar character, *The United States Review and Literary Gazette*, which closed with the second volume in September, 1827. Mr. Bryant's brief residence in New York had enlarged his circle of friends, among whom were Robert C. Sands, who was associated with him in the *New York Review*, Fitz-Greene Halleck, Gulian C. Verplanck, and others; and it had added to his popularity as a writer, the excellence and variety of his poems embracing a wider range of subjects than he had hitherto chosen. The most noticeable of these were "The African Chief," "The Disinterred Warrior," "The Indian Girl's Lament," and "The Death of the Flowers." It is not too much to say of the last that it is the most exquisite poem of the kind in the language—as perfect, in its way, as Keats' "Ode to Autumn," which it resembles in grace and delicacy of conception, and surpasses in fidelity and picturesqueness of description. It is interesting, also, from the light which it sheds upon a painful incident in the life of the poet—the early death of a beloved and beautiful sister:

"In the cold, moist earth we laid her, when the forests cast the leaf,
And we wept that one so lovely should have a life so brief:
Yet not unmeet it was that one, like that young friend of ours,
So gentle and so beautiful, should perish with the flowers."

There are other allusions to this "fair, meek blossom" in Mr. Bryant's poems. The sonnet, "Consumption," was addressed to her; and she mingled with his solemn musings in "The Past."

The *United States Review* ceased, as we have seen, in 1827. Its editor seems to have foreseen its fate in advance, and provided for it; for, before it happened, he had become connected with the *Evening Post*. This was in 1826, from which time dates Mr. Bryant's connection with American journalism—a connection which he never relinquished, and which, while it may have lessened his poetic productiveness, undoubtedly added largely to his influence with his countrymen. The *Evening Post* had just completed the first quarter of a century of its existence, and stood foremost among the journals of New York. Perhaps it was the foremost, all things considered. But, however this may be, it was a journal for which a gentleman could write. It was respectable and dignified, and it was able and sarcastic. The age of personalities, through which the American press is now passing, had not commenced. Editors were neither horsewhipped in the streets, nor deserved to be, and that impertinent eavesdropper and babbler, the interviewer, was unknown. Happy age for editors—and readers!

The lives of editors, like the lives of most men of letters, are not very interesting to the world, whatever they may be to themselves and their friends. They are passed in a routine from which there is no escape, and, if they are now and then enlivened by warfare, it is not usually of the kind to attract the sympathy of indifferent spectators. For the most part, the life editorial is a waste of the brain, and a weariness of the flesh. That it did not prove so in Mr. Bryant's case is owing, no doubt, to his love of literature, an inherent and unconquerable love, which never forsook him, even in the busiest years of journalism. While still a young man, and we may suppose not an affluent one, for his first position on the *Evening Post* was that of assistant editor, he wrote largely for *The Talisman*, the entire contents of which were furnished by himself and his friends Sands and Verplanck. It was the best annual ever brought out in America, equal, it is said, to the best of the English annuals, which is not saying much of those of a later date, but is high praise as regards the earlier volumes, to which even Scott did not disdain to contribute. Besides editing and writing for *The Talisman*, which was published for three years (1827–29–30), Mr. Bryant furnished several papers for "Tales of the Glauber Spa," a collection of entertaining stories, the work of Sands, Verplanck, Paulding, Leggett, Miss Sedgwick, and himself This was published in 1832, as was also the first collected edition of his poems. In 1834 he took a vacation from his editorial labors, and sailed with his family for Europe, leaving the *Evening Post* in charge of Leggett. He resided in Italy and Germany, which were not so overrun with travelling Americans as at present, and were all the more pleasant to a quiet family on that account. It was his intention to remain abroad three years, but the sudden illness of Leggett, which threatened to result disastrously to the *Evening Post*, compelled him to return in 1836.

In 1840 Mr. Bryant published a new collection of his poetical writings—"The Fountain, and other Poems," and, during the next year, visited the Southern States, and lived for a time in East Florida. "The White-footed Deer, and other Poems," appeared in 1844. A year later, he visited England and Scotland for the first time. That the mother-land impressed him, we may be sure; yet it is worthy of remark that nothing which he saw there—no place which he visited, and no association it awakened—is recorded in his verse. We have Italian poems from him, or poems in which Italian localities are indicated, and we have, if not German poems, several spirited translations from German song. But we recall nothing, in his verse, of which England alone was the inspiration. Yet he was, and is, admired in the land of his fathers. A proof of this fact is contained in the second volume of Beattie's "Life of Campbell." "I went with him one evening," says the writer (May 29, 1841), "to the opening of the Exhibition, in Suffolk Place. It had been arranged that he should read something, and he chose the 'Thanatopsis' of Bryant. A deep silence followed; the audience crowded round him; but when he came to the closing paragraph, his admiration almost choked his voice: 'Nothing finer had ever been written!'"

The first illustrated edition of Mr. Bryant's poetical works was published in 1846, at Philadelphia. It was a creditable piece of art work, considering the then condition of art in America—the designs being drawn by Leutz, an accomplished academician of the Düsseldorf school, who strove to make up in vigor and picturesqueness what he lacked in sentiment and feeling. A second illustrated edition was issued a few years later in New York. The illustrations were drawn on wood, many by Birket Foster, and the engraving and printing were done in England. This method of producing a fine edition of a favorite American writer would hardly suit a protectionist, but, then, Mr. Bryant was not a protectionist—as who is in literature?

The last twenty-five years of Mr. Bryant's life differed but little from those which preceded them. That is to say, they were spent in journalism, diversified, now and then, by the publication of a new volume of poems, and by several journeys on the Continent. The result of these journeys was given to the public in the shape of letters in the *Evening Post*, which letters have been collected in two or three volumes. Mr. Bryant's prose is admirable—a model of good English, simple, manly, felicitous. That its excellence has not been universally recognized and—what generally follows recognition in this country—imitated, is owing to several circumstances; as that it originally appeared in the crowded columns of a daily journal; that the American's appetite for works of travel demands more stimulating food than Mr. Bryant chose to give it, and that his poetry has overshadowed everything else that he did. Few believe that a poet can write well in prose, and those who do, prefer his poetry to his prose. The preference is a just one, but it proves nothing, for literary history shows that a good poet is always a good prose-writer.

Mr. Bryant's last great labor—it is almost superfluous to state—was a new translation of Homer. The task was worthy of him; for, though it has been performed many times, it has never been performed so well before. Scores have tried their hands at it, from Chapman down; but all have failed in some important particular — Pope, perhaps, most of all. Lord Derby's version of the "Iliad" was the best before Mr. Bryant's; it is second best now, and will soon be as antiquated as Pope's, or Cowper's, or Chapman's. No English poet ever undertook and performed so great a task as this of Mr. Bryant's so late in life. It is like Homer himself singing in his old age.

THOMAS CARLYLE

BY W. WALLACE

(1795–1881)

THOMAS CARLYLE was born December 4, 1795, at Ecclesfechan, in the parish of Hoddam, Annandale, Dumfriesshire, a small Scottish market-town, the Entipfuhl of "Sartor Resartus," six miles inland from the Solway, and about sixteen by road from Carlisle. He was the second son of James Carlyle, stone-mason, but his first son by his second wife, Margaret Aitken. James Carlyle, who came of a family which, although in humble circumstances, was an offshoot of a Border clan, was a man of great physical and moral strength, of fearless independence, and of, in his son's opinion, "a natural faculty" equal to that of Burns; and Margaret Aitken was "a woman of the fairest descent, that of the pious, the just, and the wise." Frugal, abstemious, prudent, though not niggardly, James Carlyle was prosperous according to the times, the conditions of his trade, and the standard of Ecclesfechan. He was able, therefore, to give such of his sons (he had a family of ten children in all, five sons and five daughters) as showed an aptitude for culture an excellent Scottish education. Thomas seems to have been taught his letters and elementary reading by his mother, and arithmetic by his father. His home teaching was supplemented by attendance at the Ecclesfechan school, where he was "reported complete in English" at about seven, made satisfactory progress in arithmetic, and took to Latin with enthusiasm. Thence he proceeded, in 1805, to Annan Academy, where he learned to read Latin and French fluently, ' some geometry, algebra, arithmetic thoroughly well, vague outlines of geography, Greek to the extent of the alphabet mainly." His first two years at Annan Academy were among the most miserable in his life, from his being bullied by some of his fellow-pupils, whom he describes as "coarse, unguided, tyrannous cubs." But he "revolted against them, and gave them shake for shake." In his third year, Carlyle had his first glimpse of Edward Irving, who was five years his senior, and had been a pupil at Annan Academy, but was then attending classes at Edinburgh University. In November, 1809, Carlyle himself entered that university, travelling on foot all the way, a hundred miles, between Ecclesfechan and the Scottish capital. Except in one department, Carlyle's college curriculum was not remarkable. In "the classical field" he describes himself "truly as nothing," and learned to read Homer in the original with difficulty. He preferred Homer and Æschylus to all other classical authors, found Tacitus and Virgil "really interesting," Horace "egotistical, leichtfertig," and Cicero "a windy person, and a weariness." Nor did he take much to metaphysics or moral philosophy. In geometry, however, he excelled, perhaps because Professor (subsequently Sir John) Leslie, "alone of my professors had some genius in his business, and awoke a certain enthusiasm in me." But even in the mathematical class he took no prize.

In 1813 Carlyle's attendance at the Arts course in Edinburgh University came to an end, and he began formal, though fitful, preparation for the ministry of the Church of Scotland by enrolling himself, on November 16th of the same year, as a student at its Divinity Hall. In the summer of 1814 he competed successfully at Dumfries for the mathematical mastership of Annan Academy. The post was worth only between £60 and £70 a year; but it enabled Carlyle, who was as frugal as his parents, to relieve his father of the expense of his support, and to save a few pounds. Meanwhile he read widely, and wrote of his reading at great length, and with considerable power of satiric characterization, to some of his college friends. But he found himself "abundantly lonesome, uncomfortable, and out of place" in Annan, and from the first disliked teaching; while his "sentiments on the clerical profession" were "mostly of the unfavorable kind."

In 1816 Carlyle accepted the post of assistant to the teacher of the parish (or grammar) school of Kirkcaldy, with "an emolument rated about a hundred a year," and all actual scholastic duties to perform. This change brought him into intimate relations with Edward Irving, who, having acquired a reputation as a teacher in Haddington, had been induced by the patrons of an adventure school, in Kirkcaldy, to undertake the management of it. The two, though professionally rivals, became fast friends, and read and made excursions into different parts of Scotland together. Carlyle was also introduced by Irving to various Kirkcaldy families, including that of Mr. Martin, the parish minister, one of whose daughters his friend subsequently married. He himself became attached to an ex-pupil of Irving's, a Miss Margaret Gordon, with some of whose graces he afterward endowed the dark and fickle Blumine, of "Sartor Resartus." She reciprocated Carlyle's affection, but the aunt with whom she lived put a stop to some talk of an engagement.

Carlyle found the people of Kirkcaldy more to his mind than those of Annan; but in two years the work of teaching became altogether intolerable to him, although he did it conscientiously. Successful opposition sprung up to Irving and himself, moreover, in the shape of a third school. Irving resolved to leave Kirkcaldy, and, in September, 1818, Carlyle wrote to his father, who had now given up business in Ecclesfechan and taken the farm of Mainhill, about two miles distant, that, having saved about £70, he purposed removing to Edinburgh, where he thought he "could," perhaps, find private teaching to support him, till he could fall into some other way of doing. He had now totally abandoned all thoughts of entering the ministry.

Carlyle removed to Edinburgh in November, 1818. His prospects were for some time dubious; he even entertained the idea of emigrating to America. Ultimately, however, he obtained fairly regular and well-paid private teaching. An introduction to Dr. (afterward Sir David) Brewster, the editor of the "Edinburgh Encyclopædia," led to his writing articles, chiefly biographical and geographical, for that work, at "bread-and-butter wages," and subsequently to his translating Legendre's "Elements of Geometry" from the French for £50. At the beginning of the session of 1819, he enrolled in the class of Scots Law, with the intention of becoming an advocate. But he found law as uncongenial a study as divinity. Till 1822 he lived in various lodgings in Edinburgh, finding his chief relief from tutorial drudgery in visits to his parents in Dumfriesshire. His health, which had suffered from too close application to study, was at times "most miserable;" he was in a low fever for two weeks, "was harassed by sleeplessness," and began to be tortured by his life-long foe, dyspepsia. At the same time his mind was perplexed with doubt on religious matters, regarding which he seems to have unburdened himself solely to Irving, who was then assistant to Dr. Chalmers, in Glasgow. For a period he was "totally irreligious." This struggle terminated in June, 1821, "all at once," and when he was walking along Leith Walk (the Rue St. Thomas de l'Enfer of "Sartor Resartus"), in what he regarded as his "spiritual new birth." He was now absorbed in German literature, especially the writings of Schiller and Goethe. The latter, indeed, had a more abiding influence on him than any other author.

In June, 1821, also, occurred his introduction, through Irving, to Miss Jane Baillie Welsh (1801–66), only daughter of Dr. John Welsh, medical practitioner in Haddington, who had died two years before, leaving his daughter sole heiress of the small estate of Craigenputtock, sixteen miles from the town of Dumfries. Miss Welsh, who was descended through her father from John Knox, was then living in Haddington with her mother, who claimed kindred with the patriot Wallace, and, according to Carlyle, "narrowly missed being a woman of genius." Miss Welsh had been the private pupil of Irving when he was a teacher in Haddington, and the result of the acquaintance thus brought about was a passionate attachment. They would, indeed, have been married, but for Irving's engagement to Miss Martin. The introduction of Carlyle to Miss Welsh, then twenty years of age, led to a correspondence between them on literary matters. After a time, Carlyle attempted to adopt the tone of a lover. This, however, she peremptorily forbade, although she refused other suitors.

Early in 1822, Irving, who was on the point of entering on the pastorate of the Caledonian Chapel, in Hatton Garden, London, recommended Carlyle as tutor to the three sons of Mr. Buller, a retired Anglo-Indian. The salary offered was £200 a year. Carlyle, who had previously declined the editorship of a Dundee newspaper, accepted the offer; and two of the three, Charles Buller and Arthur, came to Edinburgh in the spring, to be under his care while attending classes at the university. Carlyle found his duties pleasant, and was now able to give substantial pecuniary aid to his family, particularly as regarded the education of his younger brother John, who subsequently became a physician, but is better known as the translator of Dante's "Inferno" (1849). Carlyle, after contemplating a history of the British commonwealth, and a novel in association with Miss Welsh, arranged to write a "Life of Schiller" for Mr. Taylor, the proprietor of the *London Magazine*, and a translation of the "Wilhelm Meister" of Goethe for Mr. Boyd, an Edinburgh publisher. These two enterprises fully occupied his leisure while he was engaged as a tutor to the Bullers, whose parents, after spending the winter of 1822 in Edinburgh, removed in the following spring to Kinnaird House, near Dunkeld, on the Tay.

Carlyle paid his first visit to London in June, 1824, whither the Bullers had gone, and although his engagement with them was abruptly broken off, he remained there till March, 1825, superintending the publication in book form of his "Life of Schiller." At this time he received the first of a series of letters from Goethe and made the acquaintance of Coleridge, Thomas Campbell, Allan Cunningham, Proctor, and other literary notabilities. On March 26, 1825, he removed to the farm of Hoddam Hill, about two miles from Mainhill, which he had leased; his brother Alexander doing the practical work of farming, while he himself translated German romances. Miss Welsh now consented to become his wife, after a lengthened correspondence. In 1826 he quarrelled with his landlord, his father gave up his farm, and both removed to Scotsbrig, another farm in the vicinity of Ecclesfechan. The marriage between Carlyle and Miss Welsh took place on October 17, 1826, at her grandfather's house at Templand, Dumfriesshire, and they at once settled in 21 Comely Bank, Edinburgh. Here Carlyle completed four volumes of translations from Tieck, Musaeus, and Richter, which were published under the title of "German Romance," and commenced a didactic novel, but burned his manuscript. An introduction from Proctor to Jeffrey led to his becoming a contributor to the *Edinburgh Review*, his first article, on Jean Paul Richter, appearing in June, 1827. The same year he failed in his candidature for the chair of moral philosophy in the University of St. Andrews, in succession to Dr. Chalmers. Various subsequent attempts to obtain an academic position for Carlyle met with no better success.

In May, 1828, the Carlyles removed to Mrs. Carlyle's little property of Craigenputtock, which, in a letter to Goethe, he described as "the loneliest nook in Britain, six miles removed from anyone likely to visit me," and there they lived for about six years. Carlyle subsisted during this period by writing for a number of reviews, including the *Edinburgh*, the *Westminster*, the *Foreign Quarterly*, and *Fraser's Magazine*. The chief of the essays which he produced at Craigenputtock are those on Burns, Samuel Johnson, Goethe, Voltaire, Diderot, and Schiller. He also wrote a "History of German Literature," the best parts of which were subsequently published in the form of essays; and in 1833–34 there appeared, by instalments in *Fraser's Magazine*, "Sartor Resartus," his most characteristic work, the fantastic hero of which, Diogenes Teufelsdröckh, illustrates in his life and opinions the mystical and grotesque "Philosophy of Clothes." "Sartor Resartus" is notable in the literary history of Carlyle as revealing the Germanization of his mind, and his abandonment of the comparatively simple diction of his earlier essays for the thoroughly individual style of his later works —eruptive, ejaculatory, but always powerful, and often rising to an epic sublimity. Life at Craigenputtock was varied on the part of Carlyle by occasional visits to Edinburgh, in one of which the idea of writing his "French Revolution" occurred to him; by a residence of six months in London, during which he made the acquaintance of John Stuart Mill and John Sterling; and by visits from old friends like Jeffrey, and new admirers like Emerson. In 1830 Carlyle was reduced to great straits; and he had to borrow £50 from Jeffrey for the expenses of his journey to London, although he declined to accept an annuity of £100 from the same source.

Having by 1834 again saved £200, Carlyle resolved to try his fortune in London, and on June 10th established himself in the house, 5 Cheyne Row, Chelsea, in which he lived till the day of his death. Here he settled down to the writing of his "French Revolution," which appeared in 1837. This enterprise was also put an end to in 1835, owing to the destruction, by a servant-girl, of all but four or five leaves of the manuscript of the first volume, which had been lent to John Stuart Mill. Carlyle accepted £100 from Mill as compensation for his loss.

In the years 1837, 1838, 1839, and 1840, Carlyle lectured to considerable, yet select, audiences on "German Literature," "The Successive Periods of European Culture," "The Revolutions of Modern Europe," and "Heroes, Hero-worship, and the Heroic in History." Carlyle's yearly earnings from these lectures, the last series of which had been published, varied between £135 and £300, and maintained him and his wife till the "French Revolution" not only established his reputation as a literary genius of the highest order, and as, in Goethe's phrase, "a new moral force," but placed him beyond the possibility of want. Yet, until late in life, his annual income from literature was not more than £400. In 1838 appeared "Sartor Resartus" in book form, and the first edition of his "Miscellanies." The following year, Carlyle, who was at one time averse to the idea of becoming a personal force in politics, published the first of a series of attacks on the shams and corruptions of modern society, under the title of "Chartism." This he followed in 1843 with "Past and Present," and in 1850 with "Latter-day Pamphlets," which proved among other things that, if he did not quite approve of slavery, he disapproved of the manner in which it had been abolished in the British dominions. In 1845 appeared "Cromwell's Letters and Speeches," perhaps the most successful of all his works, inasmuch as it completely revolutionized the public estimate of its subject. In 1851 he published a biography of his friend, John Sterling. From this time Carlyle gave himself up entirely to his largest work, "The History of Frederick II., commonly called Frederick the Great," the first two volumes of which were published in 1858, and which was concluded in 1865. The preparation of this book led Carlyle to make two ex-

MRS. ALLINGHAM FINXIT.

CARLYLE AT CHELSEA.

cursions to the Continent, which, with a yachting trip to Ostend, two tours in Ireland (on which he intended to write a book based on a diary that was published after his death), and regular visits to his kindred and friends in Scotland, formed the chief distractions from his literary labors. Among the few public movements with which Carlyle identified himself was that which resulted in the establishment of the London Library, in 1839. In August, 1866, he also allowed himself to be elected chairman of the committee for the defence of Mr. Eyre, who had been recalled from his post of Governor of Jamaica on the ground of his having shown unnecessary severity in suppressing a negro insurrection which had broken out in October of the previous year, or, as Carlyle put it, for having "saved the West Indies and hanged one incendiary mulatto, well worth the gallows."

On November 11, 1865, Carlyle was elected lord rector of Edinburgh University, by a majority of 657 votes over 310 recorded for Mr. Disraeli. On April 2, 1866, the ceremony of his installation took place amid extraordinary demonstations of enthusiasm, when he delivered an address in which he embodied his moral experiences in the form of advice to the younger members of his audience. The success attending this visit to Edinburgh was quite obliterated by the news, which reached him in Dumfries, of the death, on April 21st, of Mrs. Carlyle, as she was driving in her carriage in Hyde Park. Carlyle's grief developed into remorse when he discovered, from certain of her letters, and from a journal which she kept, that during a period of her married life his irritability of temper and unconscious want of consideration for her wishes, had caused her much misery and even ill-health, which she studiously concealed from him. It has also been demonstrated, by the letters and memorials of Jane Welsh Carlyle, that in the years 1855 and 1856 they were somewhat estranged, owing to Carlyle's liking for the society of Harriet, Lady Ashburton. After the death of Lady Ashburton, there were no differences between them, except such as might be expected in the case of two persons of irritable and high-strung natures, and of uncompromising veracity. These memorials are also of note as proving Mrs. Carlyle to have been one of the keenest critics, most brilliant letter-writers, and most accomplished of women of her time.

Carlyle wrote no important work after his wife's death, although after a visit to Mentone in 1867, where he partially composed his "Personal Reminiscences," he settled down to his old life in London. In August, 1867, there appeared in *Macmillan's Magazine* his view of British democracy, under the title of "Shooting Niagara." He prepared a special edition of his collected works, and added to them, in 1875, a fresh volume containing "The Early Kings of Norway" and an essay on the "Portraits of John Knox." On November 18, 1870, he wrote a letter to the *Times* on the "Franco-German Question," defending the attitude of Germany. He expressed privately strong opposition to the Irish policy of Mr. Gladstone. In February, 1874, he was offered and accepted the Prussian Order of Merit in recognition of his having written the "Life of Frederick the Great," who founded the Order. Toward the end of the same year Mr. Disraeli offered him the Grand Cross of the Bath (with the alternative of a baronetcy) and a pension of "an amount equal to a good fellowship," but he declined both.

His eightieth birthday, December 4, 1875, brought Carlyle many tributes of respect, including a gold medal from a number of Scottish admirers, and "a noble and most unexpected" note from Prince Bismarck. On May 5, 1877, he published a short letter in the *Times*, referring to a rumor that Mr. Disraeli, as Premier, meditated forcing on a "Philo-Turk war against Russia," and protesting against any such design. This was his last public act. On February 5, 1881, he died at his house in Chelsea. A burial in Westminster Abbey was offered, but in accordance with his own wish, he was laid in the churchyard of Ecclesfechan, beside his kindred.

The time has not yet come for the passing of a final judgment on Carlyle's position in British literature. He was, above all things, a prophet in the guise of a man of letters, who predicted the reverse of smooth things for his country and for the world; and it has yet to be seen if his predictions will be fulfilled. But it may be said even now, and without risk of contradiction, that, for good or evil, he exerted a greater influence on British literature during the middle of the nineteenth century, and, through that literature, on the ethical, religious, and political beliefs of his time, than any of his contemporaries; that, as a humorist, using humor seriously and as a weapon for the enforcement of his opinions, he has no superior, combining in himself what is best in Dunbar, Burns, Rabelais, and Swift; that, as a master of the graphic in style, he has no rival and no second —showing an equal facility in photographing nature, and in grasping and presenting in appropriate phraseology the salient points of personal character as exhibited in expression, habits, features, build, and dress.

Of Carlyle as a man, it is also permissible to say that, irritable, impatient, intolerant, fiercely proud, occasionally hasty in his judgments though he was, preserving to the last, nor caring to get rid of, certain Scottish and Annandale rusticities of manner and mental attitude, no one was ever more essentially self-controlled, patient, and humble than he, or ever faced the real misfortunes of life with a calmer courage; that he was as incapable of conscious injustice, unkindliness, or vindictiveness, as he was of insincerity or impurity; that in pecuniary straits, even in despair, he never wrote a line that he did not believe, never swerved by a hair's breadth from the noble purposes which dominated his life and extinguished all selfish ambition.

The following letter was written by Carlyle, in 1876, to a young man who had asked his advice on the choice of a profession:

"Dear Sir,—I respect your conscientious scruples in regard to choosing a profession, and wish much I had the power of giving you advice that would be of the least service. But that, I fear, in my total ignorance of yourself and the posture of your affairs, is pretty nearly impossible. The profession of the law is in many respects a most honorable one, and has this to recommend it, that a man succeeds there, if he succeeds at all, in an independent and manful manner, by force of his own talent and behavior, without needing to seek patronage from anybody. As to ambition, that is, no doubt, a thing to be carefully discouraged in oneself; but it does not necessarily inhere in the barrister's profession more than in many others, and I have known one or two who, by quiet fidelity in promoting justice, and by keeping down litigation, had acquired the epithet of the 'honest lawyer,' which appeared to me altogether human and beautiful.

"Literature, as a profession, is what I would counsel no faithful man to be concerned with, except when absolutely forced into it, under penalty, as it were, of death. The pursuit of culture, too, is in the highest degree recommendable to every human soul, and may be successfully achieved in almost any honest employment that has wages paid for it. No doubt, too, the church seems to offer facilities in this respect; but I will by no means advise you to overcome your reluctance against seeking refuge *there*. On the whole, there is nothing strikes me likelier for one of your disposition than the profession of teacher, which is rising into higher request every day, and has scope in it for the grandest endowments of human faculties (could such hitherto be got to enter it), and of all useful and fruitful employments may be defined as the usefullest, fruitfullest, and also indispensablest in these days of ours.

"Regretting much that I can help you so infinitely little, bidding you take pious and patient counsel with your own soul, and wishing you with great truth a happy result, I remain, dear sir, Faithfully yours,

"T. CARLYLE."

VICTOR HUGO

BY MARGARET O. W. OLIPHANT

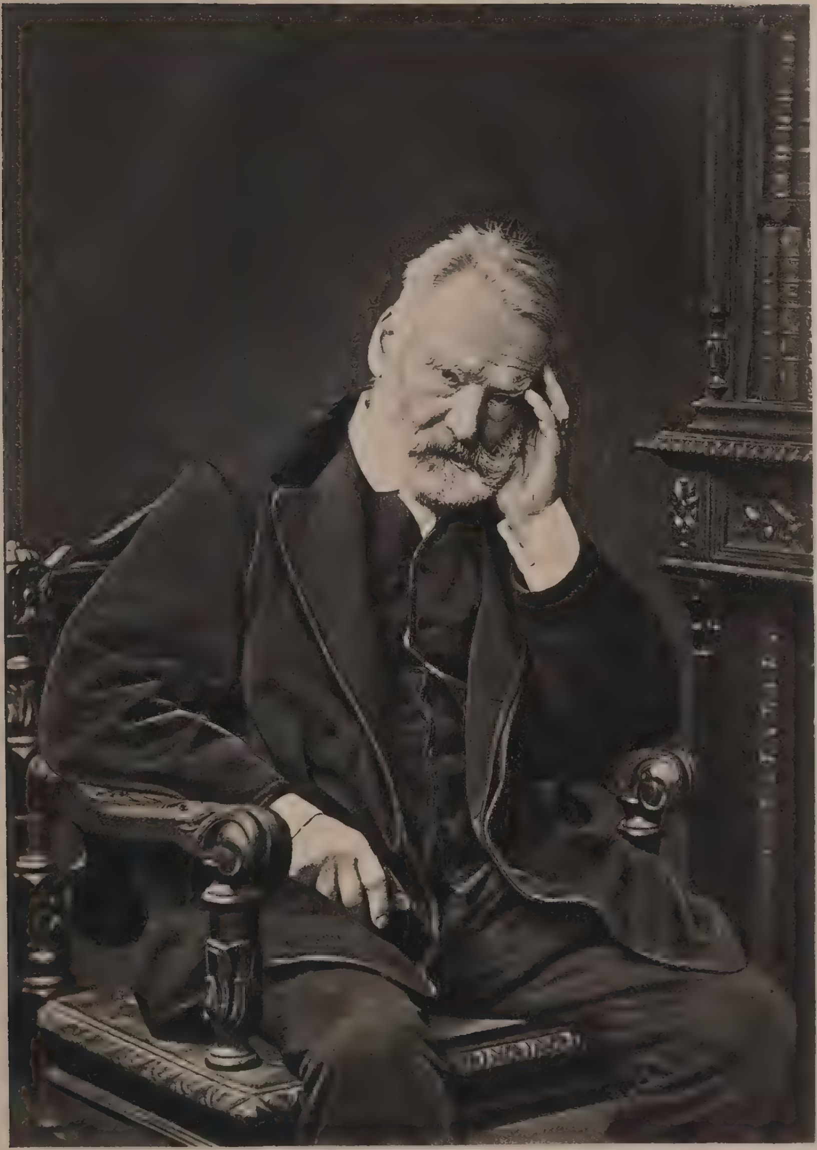
(1802–1885)

THE greatest of literary Frenchmen, the greatest man of genius whom this century has known, the Altissimo Poeta, the most splendid romancist of his age, has accomplished his great career. He was the last survivor of a great period in French literature—the last member of one of the greatest literary brotherhoods which has ever existed; and he carried with him to the very portals of the grave a lamp of genius scarcely dimmed, and a personal power and influence which every year increased. Not very long ago, all Europe gathered round him to offer congratulations on his hale and hearty old age; since then, with more than the hands full of flowers of the classic tradition, with honors and praises from every quarter of the earth, he has been carried to his grave. The very sight of a man so distinguished, the consciousness of his honored existence as the representative of the noblest and most all-embracing of the arts—that which depends for its effects upon the simplest and most universal of instincts—was an advantage to the world. The extravagances of hero-worship are inevitable, and in nothing is the ridiculous so tremblingly near to the sublime; but allowing for all that, and for what is worse, the almost equally inevitable foolishness which adulation creates, the position of Victor Hugo was of itself an advantage to the world. In a soberer *pose* altogether, and with a noble modesty which we may claim as belonging to our race, Walter Scott occupied a somewhat similar position—which would have been all the greater had he lived to Hugo's age, an element which must necessarily be taken into consideration; but, save in this one case, there has been no parallel to the eminence of the great Frenchman in the estimation of his country and of the world.

It is not now that the critic requires to step forth to establish the foundations of this great fame, or decide upon its reality or lasting character. This has been done in the poet's lifetime by a hundred voices, favorable and otherwise; no need to wait for death to give the final decision, as in some cases has been necessary. It is scarcely possible to imagine that, after so long a time, any discovery can be made, or any change of taste occur, which would interfere with the supreme position of Victor Hugo. A new generation has been born in the faith which to their elders is a matter of assured and triumphant conviction. But it is a grateful office to go over again some of the noblest productions which human genius has ever given forth, and to contemplate in their unity the many works of a life as much longer than that of ordinary men as its inspiration was above theirs.

It seems sad and strange, as well as laughable and ludicrous, that the great poet should be regarded by a vast number of his countrymen, and perhaps by the majority of the Paris mob which paid him the last honors in so characteristic a way, as a revolutionary politician and a democratic leader. We will take the privilege of the foreigner to leave out that side of his life as much as may be practicable. "Napoléon le Petit" and the "Histoire d'un Crime" are works but little worthy of his genius. Political animosities, sharpened by personal grievances, have in many cases an immense immediate effect in literature, but they pay for this easy success by speedy collapse; and scarcely even the magnificent rhetoric and splendid vituperation of "Les Châtiments" will keep them living when the world has forgotten the lesser Napoleon, as it already begins to do. His patriotic fury, the impassioned utterances of his exile, the tremendous force of feeling with which he flung himself into the struggles of France, took up a large share of Victor Hugo's life, and will procure him a certain place in the historical records of his period. But when all the commotion and the din have died away, as indeed in a great measure they have already done, these fiery diatribes, these burning lava-

FROM LIFE.



Photogravure Goupil & Cie

streams, will be of little more importance than the dustiest "mémoires pour servir"—materials from which the historian, with much smoothing down and apologies for the pyrotechnics of a past age, will take here and there a vivid touch to illustrate his theories or brighten his narrative. They will retain, too, a certain importance as autobiography. But fortunately the great mass of the work which Victor Hugo has left behind him can be separated from the polemics of his troubled age and fiery temper. It is not in any sense a peaceful literature. Conflict is its very inspiration. The struggle of human misery with all the confusing and overbearing forces of life; of poverty with the requirements and oppressions of wealth; of the small with the great; of the people with tyrants; of Man with Fate—these are his subjects, and he is never an impartial historian. He is on the side of the weak in every combat, the partisan of the oppressed. But this does not detract from his work when his opponents are the oppressors of the past, or the still more subtle, veiled, and unassailable forces of Destiny. The poet's region is there: he is born, if not to set right the times which are out of joint, at least to read to the world the high and often terrible lesson of the ages. But it vulgarizes his work when he is seen, tooth and nail, in violent personal conflict with foemen unworthy of his steel, embalming in poetry the trivial or the uncompleted incidents of contemporary warfare. It becomes almost ludicrous, indeed, when we find him pouring forth page after page of vehement and burning complaint in respect to the personal sufferings inflicted on himself, when we know that throughout his career Hugo never knew what the cold shock of failure was, and that, from the moment when Chateaubriand adopted him into the ranks of the poets as *l'enfant sublime*, until the moment when all Paris conducted him to his last resting-place, no man has had a more enthusiastic following, or accomplished a more triumphant career.

Victor Hugo was a son of the Revolution. He was born, as it were, between the two camps, at a moment when France was the theatre of the greatest popular struggle in modern history, of a mother who was a Breton and a Legitimist, and a father who was a Republican general—an extraordinary combination. This does not seem, however, to have made, as we might think, family life impossible, for Madame Hugo and her children followed the drum, and, notwithstanding all differences of opinion, found it possible to keep together. He was educated, it would appear, under his mother's influence rather than that of the soldier-father, and did not, till his mind was quite mature, throw himself into the revolutionary opinions which afterward influenced him so greatly. A Royalist in the Restoration period, an observant but not excited spectator of public affairs from 1830 to 1848, it was not till the *coup d'état* and the beginning of the reign of the third Napoleon that he was seized with the passion of political life. That great betrayal seems to have stung him to a frenzied resistance and put poison in his veins. His country was cheated and betrayed; the liberty for which she had made so many exertions, both heroic and fantastical, taken from her; and his own personal liberty and safety threatened. Victor Hugo's soul then burst into *feu et flamme*. He caught fire like a volcano long silent, a burning mountain that had simulated quiet unawares, and clothed itself with vineyards and villages. In the tranquil days when Louis-Philippe plotted and pottered, and France lay dormant, amusing her restrained spirit with the outbreak of the romantic against the classical, and taking pleasure in the burst of genius which had arisen suddenly and unawares in her midst, the poet was so little dissatisfied with the *bourgeois régime* that he accepted the title of "pair de France." Montalembert had received it some time before. There must have been something soothing, not inharmonious to the poetical mind, in the slumbrous reign which gradually became intolerable to the commonalty and got itself into contempt with all the world. The young poets of the time were peaceful, not discontented. Full of energy as they were, they took no part in the gathering storm. Hugo, a peer, tranquil in the superior chamber; young De Musset, a courtier of the Duke of Orleans, and hoping for the king's notice of his verses. The eruption was preparing, the subterranean fires alight; but the sons of genius took no notice. When the tremendous awakening came, it must, in the case of Hugo at least, have gained additional force from the long restraint. He was in the height of life, a man of forty-six, the leader of the romantic school, which by that time had overcome opposition and won the freedom for which it contended, the author of "Hernani" and the other great plays which form one of his chief titles to fame, and of volumes of lyrics which had taken the very heart of the French people, and given a new development to the language. And it was also during this peaceful period that he had taken in another direction a first step of unexampled power and brilliancy in the romance of "Notre Dame." Even among men of acknowledged genius, few have done so much in a lifetime as Victor Hugo had done up to this break in his career. We are so accustomed to the attitude of demagogue which he took afterward, to the violent revolutionary, the furious exile, the denunciatory prophet of the "Châtiments," that it is strange to realize that his later aspect was prefaced by a long, peaceful, and prosperous beginning. France had never seen a more magnificent band than that which surrounded him, and which has made the reign of the *Roi-bourgeois* illustrious in spite of itself; and it is curious to mark that these great intelligences did not object to their ruler nor to his ways, but lived like good citizens, with but an occasional fling at semi-sentimental politics. Hugo was the champion of abstract right in all the discussions in which he took part. He it was who proposed, among other things, that the Bonaparte family should be permitted to return to France. Perhaps, had he been less abstract and logical, and more moved by the laws of expediency, it might have been better both for France and for himself.

The plays which he produced in this time of prosperous calm and apparent peace are without question the most remarkable dramatic works of this century, and several of them will, we have no doubt, take their place permanently among the few of all ages and countries which the world will not willingly let die.

While these plays were being written, and the mind of their author reaching its full development, the fountains of pure poetry, those outbursts of song which are often the most delightful and dear of all the utterances of the poet, were flowing forth, refreshing and fertilizing French literature, and giving a noble utterance to the new thought and rising energy of the times. His youth gave forth some uncertain notes, his fancy roaming from Bourbon to Bonaparte. But that his imagination should have been seized by the recollection of the great Napoleon is so natural, so inevitable, one would suppose, for every young Frenchman, and especially for the son of a Bonapartist general, that there would have been something lacking in him had he escaped that enthusiasm. Apart from these waves of national sentiment, and from the vague music of the "Orientales" and other such preludes and symphonies, there is poetry enough in the various volumes which followed each other at uncertain intervals, to have fully furnished one man of genius with fame enough for what we call immortality. Hugo has enough and to spare for all subjects that occurred to him. A sunset, a landscape, a love song, alternate in his pages with a philosophical discussion, or a brief and brilliant scene snatched from history, from contemporary life, from his own inner existence, all clothed in the noblest verse of which the French language is capable. His power over that language is boundless, the wealth of an utterance which never pauses for a word, which disregards all rules yet glorifies them, which is ready for every suggestion, and finds nothing too terrible, nothing too tender for the tongue which, at his bidding, leaps into blazing eloquence, or rolls in clouds and thunder, or murmurs with the accent of a dove. Never had there been so great a gamut, a compass so extended.

It is not, however, upon his poetry, either in the form of drama, lyric, or narrative, that his fame out of France, or at least in England, is founded. There is no more usual deliverance of superficial criticism than that which declares French poetry in general to be either nought—which is still a not uncommon notion—or at least not great enough to be worth the study which alone could make it comprehensible. There are many good people who dare to say this, yet live, audacious, and unconscious of their folly. We have, however, to consider Victor Hugo on a ground which no one ventures to dispute. The great romances—for which we should like to invent another name—which we cannot call novels, and which are too majestic even for the title of romance, though that means something more than the corresponding word in English—are in their kind and period the greatest works produced in his time.

RALPH WALDO EMERSON

By Moncure D. Conway

(1803–1882)

On the 30th day of April, 1882, Ralph Waldo Emerson was "gathered to his fathers," at Concord, Mass. The simple Hebrew phrase was never more appropriate, for his ancestors had founded the town and been foremost at every period of its remarkable history. More than two hundred and fifty years ago John Eliot, who had gone from the University of Cambridge, England, to be the "Apostle of the Indians," found on the banks of the Musketaquid a settlement of natives, into whose language he translated the New Testament. In 1634, the Rev. Peter Bulkeley, of Bedfordshire, whose Puritan proclivities brought him under the ban of Laud, migrated with a number of his parishioners to New England; these settled themselves at Musketaquid, which they named Concord. In the next year went, from County Durham probably, Thomas Emerson, whose son married a Bulkeley, and his grandson Rebecca Waldo, descendant of a family of the Waldenses. It was at Concord that the soldiers of George III. first met with resistance. Along the road where many Englishmen have walked with Emerson and Hawthorne, the retreat took place, and wounded soldiers were taken into homes they had invaded to learn the meaning of love to enemies. Some of these brave men never again left the village where they were so kindly nursed. Concord, with its thirteen hundred inhabitants, supplied Washington's army with wood and hay, and suffering Boston with grain and money, with a generosity that shines in American annals. Washington's headquarters were at Craigie House, so long the home of Longfellow, and the Harvard buildings being used as barracks, the university was transferred to Concord.

No mere literary estimate of Emerson's writings can adequately report the man or his work. The value placed upon him by Americans appears strangely exaggerated beside the contemporary English criticism. It were, indeed, easy to cite from European thinkers—Carlyle, Quinet, John Sterling, Arthur Clough, Tyndall, Herman Grimm—words concerning Emerson glowing as those of Margaret Fuller, Hawthorne, Curtis, Lowell, and other American authors; but if such tributes from individual minds are universally felt in America alone, to be simplest truth and soberness, it is because Emerson cannot be seen detached from the cumulative tendencies summed up in him, and from the indefinable revolution in which they found, and still find, expression.

The father of Emerson was a Unitarian preacher of fine culture, melodious voice, handsome person, and especially noted for his paramount interest in the ethical and universal elements of religion. He died in 1811, at the age of forty-two, leaving his five sons, of whom Waldo, then eight years old, was the second, to the care of his young wife, who had been Ruth Haskins, of Boston. Emerson's early growth was under the fostering care of good and refined women. His mother has been described by one who knew her, the late Dr. Frothingham, as "of a discerning spirit, and a most courteous bearing; one who knew how to guide the affairs of her own house, as long as she was responsible for that, with the sweetest authority. Both her mind and character were of a superior order, and they set their stamp upon manners of peculiar softness and natural grace and quiet dignity." She was assisted in bringing up her family by her sister-in-law, Mary Emerson, a scholarly woman, well read in theology and philosophy, whose original ideas and sayings marked her as "a character." Another woman who exercised a great influence upon him was Sarah Bradford, afterward married to his relative, Samuel Ripley. She was as thorough a Greek scholar as any person in America, a good mathematician, and a diligent student of science. Many a Harvard student has she coached in that Old Manse where she resided until her death (1867), and where the writer of this has often listened with admiration to her extraordinary conversation. At the same time nothing could have exceeded the practical wisdom and tact with which her household was regulated. "She was absolutely without pedantry," said Emerson. "Nobody ever heard of her learning until a necessity came for its use, and then nothing could be more simple than her solution of the problem proposed to her." At eleven years of age, when Emerson was in the Latin school at Boston, he used to send his translations, generally poetic, to Sarah Bradford for criticism. The "Fates" of Michael Angelo, a large copy of which hung in Emerson's study, must sometimes have softened to the faces of the Ruth and Mary and Sarah, who spun for him the fine golden thread of destiny. Mrs. Emerson had the happiness of seeing four of her sons distinguished for their ability; indeed, it seemed for a time doubtful whether William, Waldo, Edward, or Charles promised the more brilliant career. When the two elder had graduated at Harvard University, they taught at school in order to aid the two younger in completing their course; but these two died prematurely. William was to have been the preacher of the family, but, while pursuing his studies in Germany, he found that he could not honestly follow his father's profession—albeit Goethe, whom he knew, sought to persuade him otherwise. He afterward became an eminent lawyer. His mother's disappointment at this probably led to Emerson's adoption of the profession that his brother had declined. He graduated at eighteen, with a reputation for classical knowledge, general literary culture, and elocution. He had won the Boylston prize for "declamation," and was chosen by his class to deliver the usual poem at graduation. I have heard him say that it was then his ambition to become a teacher of elocution, and that he still regarded it as a less humble aspiration than it might seem. Those who have sat under the spell of Emerson's discourse would certainly never associate anything commonly called rhetoric with him; but I derived, from conversation with him, that his discontent with conventionalisms of thought first took this form of dissatisfaction with the conventional oratory. He thought there might be taught an art of putting things so that they could not be gainsaid. But a man must really hold that which he is to state successfully. He startled me by saying, "I believe that a really eloquent man, though an atheist, or whatever his opinions, would be listened to by any educated congregation in Boston." No one, he said, could discover the charm of Channing's preaching by reading his sermons; there was the heart that rose up to meet him: here was something sufficient, and the multitude went off radiant, fed, satisfied. But Emerson was to teach the new art of eloquence by example.

In 1823, now twenty years of age, Emerson began his studies in theology. Though often attending lectures in Harvard Divinity College he never regularly entered there, but still sat at the feet of Channing, who took a deep personal interest in him. He was "approbated" by the Ministers' Association in 1826. His health having suffered by overwork he passed a winter in the South, and in the following year preached several Sundays at New Bedford, Mass., where he found some friends among the Quakers. He also preached for a time in Concord. In 1829 he was chosen minister of a large congregation in Boston. A venerable minister gave me an account of a sermon he heard from Emerson in those days, impressed on his memory by the vitality it infused in an old theme, and the simplicity with which it was delivered. The text was, "What is a man profited if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" The emphasis was on the word "own;" and the general theme was, that to every man the great end of existence was the preservation and culture of his individual mind and character. Each man must be saved by his own inward redeemer; and the whole world was for each but a plastic material through which the individual spirit was to realize itself. Aspiration and thought become clear and real only by action and life. If knowledge lead not to action, it passes away, being preserved only on the condition of being used. "The last thing," said my informant, "that any of us who heard him would have predicted of the youth, whose quiet simplicity and piety captivated all, was that he would become the religious revolutionist of America."

And, indeed, so softly did the old religious forms slip away from Emerson, that when he informed his congregation that he could not longer administer the sacrament to them, they could not associate any formidable heresy with his position. They were loath to part with him. In the three years of his ministry he had reflected honor upon their pulpit. He had been active in the philanthropic work of Boston, was chaplain of the Legislature, and on the School Board. A few months after his settlement in Boston he had married Ellen Louisa Tucker and a few months before he gave up his pulpit she died. Under these circumstances of depression Emerson came on his first visit to Europe. The record of his pilgrimage to Coleridge's house at Highgate, to Rydal Mount, and to Craigenputtock, is given in Emerson's "English Traits." He came, hoping to find light upon more serious questions than any that had arisen between him and his

Boston congregation ; he returned with but one thing made clearer, namely that he had begun an ascent which each must climb alone.

The Old Manse was built in 1767 for Emerson's grandfather, who had become minister of Concord church. Emerson's father was the first child born in it, and used to claim that he was "in arms" on the field when the British were repulsed, being six years old when the fight occurred close to the windows. In this house we now find Emerson, at the age of thirty-one, studying Plato and Plotinus, and the English mystics, but also, with Sarah Ripley, studying Goethe and savants of the new school, like Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire. Here was conceived his first book, "Nature." This essay was published in 1836, the same year in which he wrote the Concord hymn, since annually sung, with its line about "the shot heard round the world." The little book was not at once heard so far, but it proved also the first shot of a revolution. A writer in the *Saturday Review* speaks of "the great men whom America and England have jointly lost"—Emerson and Darwin—and remarks that "some of those who have been forward in taking up and advancing the impulse given by Darwin, not only on the general ground where it started, but as a source of energy in the wider application of scientific thought, have once and again openly declared that they owe not a little to Emerson." This just remark may be illustrated by Dr. Tyndall's words, in 1873: "The first time I ever knew Waldo Emerson was when, years ago, I picked up at a stall a copy of his 'Nature'; I read it with such delight, and I have never ceased to read it ; and if anyone can be said to have given the impulse to my mind it is Emerson ; whatever I have done the world owes him." But there is still more significance in this matter. In 1836, when Darwin returned from his voyage round the world, Emerson's "Nature" appeared, in which the new world discovered by the Englishman was ideally recognized by the American.

In 1835 Emerson was married to Lidian Jackson, sister of the late Dr. C. T. Jackson, well known in connection with the discovery of anæsthetics. The Concord house and farm were now purchased, and Emerson's mother came to reside with him. The first works of Emerson brought to his doors those strange pilgrims whom Hawthorne has described in his "Mosses from an old Manse." Lover of solitude as he was, the new teacher had never the heart to send empty from his door anyone of those dejected people groping for the light who sought him out. Mrs. Emerson, a lady of refined sensibilities and profoundly religious nature, must often have been severely tried by these throngs, but not even delicate health prevented her from exercising a large and beautiful hospitality to these spiritually lame, halt, and heart-sick who came to receive a healing touch. Though never ruffled, Emerson was not defenceless before boorish intruders. On one occasion a boisterous declaimer against "the conventionalities," who kept on his hat in the drawing-room after invitation to lay it aside, was told, "We will continue the conversation in the garden," and was genially taken out of doors to enter them no more. Few were the sane, as he told me, who visited him in those earlier days, but the unsane were pretty generally those whose first instinct under any new light is to get it into a tabernacle. Fortunately for Emerson and his household, some of his ablest friends conceived the idea of founding a new society on his principles at Brook Farm, near Boston ; but, unfortunately for that community, the unsane folk flocked to it, and it was speedily brought to nought. Some able men, like George Ripley, George Curtis, and Charles Dana, belonged to that community in their youth, but probably Hawthorne wrote the experience of all of them when, just after leaving it, he entered in his note-book (1841), "Really I should judge it to be twenty years since I left Brook Farm. . . . It already looks like a dream behind me. The real Me was never a member of the community ; there had been a spectral appearance there, sounding the horn at daybreak, and milking the cows, and hoeing the potatoes, and raking hay, toiling in the sun, and doing me the honor to assume my name. But this spectre was not myself." The Transcendental Club, too, which preceded this, and which met a few times at the house of Dr. Channing (who tried to comprehend the new ideas, and was always the friend of Emerson), failed. The quarterly magazine that was started, the *Dial*, did more. Four volumes of it appeared, and to this day they are so interesting that it is a wonder they have not been reprinted ; but the serene hours thereon marked were speedily succeeded by days of strife and storm, in which the writers of that periodical were summoned to be leaders. Emerson remained in his home. He now and then visited Brook Farm, but was shrewd enough to foresee its catastrophe from the first. The child who sought her lost butterfly with tears, not knowing that it was softly perched upon her head, had a counterpart in the many enthusiasts, who continued to seek in communities or new sects the beauty which had floated before their eyes ; but some there were who made the happier discovery that a quiet New England village, with its cultivated families, in whose Town Hall Emerson taught, was ideal enough. Gradually Prospero drew around him the spirits to which he was related, and Concord became the intellectual centre of the country.

Emerson, as has been stated, at the beginning of his career had assumed the truth of evolution in nature. More and more this idea became fruitful to him. His friend Agassiz, on the appearance of "The Vestiges of Creation," had committed himself warmly against it, but Emerson felt certain that the future of science belonged to that principle, which he had reached by his poetic intuition. Nearly thirty years ago, when I was a member of Divinity College, the theology taught was still a slightly rationalistic Unitarianism and the science qualified by it (though Agassiz would not admit miracle). Some of the students were finding their real professor in Concord. On one evening we went out, travelling the seventeen miles in sleighs, to hear a lecture that was to have been given by him ; it had been unavoidably postponed, but Emerson, hearing of our arrival, invited us to his house, and we had no reason to feel any disappointment. Nevertheless, Emerson wrote me that if I would make the preparations he would read an essay in my room. On that occasion Emerson read a paper on "Poetry," in which he stated fully and clearly the doctrine of evolution. This was five years before the appearance of the papers of Darwin and Wallace in the journal of the Linnæan Society (1858), though I find in Emerson's essay as published (" Letters and Social Aims," Chatto & Windus, 1876) that Darwin is mentioned; otherwise that essay is precisely the same that was read to us in 1853. I well remember how we were startled that afternoon by Emerson's emphatic declaration—" There is one animal, one plant, one matter, and one force." He said also: " Science does not know its debt to imagination. Goethe did not believe that a great naturalist could exist without this faculty. He was himself conscious of that help, which made him a prophet among doctors. From this vision he gave grave hints to the geologist, the botanist, and the optician." The name of Emerson would now be set beside that of Goethe by every man of science in America. While as yet " The Vestiges of Creation " was trampled on by preachers and professors, Emerson affirmed its principle to be true, and during some years, in which no recognized man of science ventured to accept Darwin's hypothesis, he sustained its claim by references to the scientific authorities of Europe. For the rest, this essay, read to us at Divinity College, did for some who heard it very much the same that the generalization of Darwin has done for vast numbers of minds. The harmony of nature and thought was in it, clouds floated into light, and though poets were present, it appeared the truest New World poem that we were gathered there around the seer in whose vision the central identity in nature flowed through man's reason, gently did away with discords through their promise of larger harmonies. That which the Brahmans found in the far East, our little company there in the West knew also—" From the poisonous tree of the world two species of fruit are produced, sweet as the waters of life: Love, or the society of beautiful souls, and Poetry, whose taste is like the immortal juice Vishnu." When Emerson had finished there was a hush of silence, the usual applause of his listeners; it seemed hardly broken when Otto Dresel performed some " songs without words."

Emerson was the first man of high social position in America who openly took the anti-slavery position. On May 29, 1831, he admitted an abolitionist to lecture on the subject in his church, six years before even Channing had committed himself to that side. Garrison was at that time regarded as a vulgar street-preacher of notions too wild to excite more than a smile. The despised group on Boston Common was first sheltered by Emerson, and this action was more significant because Emerson was chaplain of the Massachusetts Legislature. Emerson first drew the sympathy of scholars to that side. The voices of the two popular orators, Channing and Phillips, soon followed, and Longfellow began to write the anti-slavery poems collected in 1842. Emerson could not throw himself into any organization, nor did he encourage the scholars around him to do so; he believed that to elevate character, to raise the ethical standard, to inspire courage in the intellect of the country, would speedily make its atmosphere too pure for a slave to breathe. Fearless in vindicating those whose convictions led them to enlist for this particular struggle, Emerson saw in slavery one among many symptoms of the moral disease of the time. " The timidity of our public opinion," he said, "is our disease; or, shall I say, the absence of private opinion. Good nature is plentiful, but we want justice with heart of steel to fight down the proud. The private mind has the access to the totality of goodness and truth, that it may be a balance to a corrupt society; and to stand for the private verdict against popular clamor is the office of the noble. If a humane measure is propounded in behalf of the slave, or of the Irishman, or the Catholic, or for the succor of the poor, that sentiment, that project, will have the homage of the hero. That is his nobility, his oath of knighthood, to succor the helpless and oppressed; always to throw himself on the side of weakness, of youth, of hope, on the liberal, on the expansive side; never on the conserving, the timorous, the lock-and-bolt system. More than our good-will we may not be able to give. We have our own affairs, our own genius, which chain us to our proper work. We cannot give our life to the cause of the debtor, of the slave, or the pauper, as another is doing; but to one thing we are bound, not to blaspheme the sentiment and the work of that man, not to throw stumbling-blocks in the way of the abolitionist, the philanthropist, as the organs of influence and opinion are swift to do." Emerson had as much practical sagacity as genius; when he spoke these words (in a lecture on "The Young American," in Boston, 1844) he had reached a commanding position, carrying with it gravest responsibilities; the destinies of hundreds of young men and women were determined by his lectures. But with reference to the anti-slavery movement, he did more than he exacted from others, and recognized it as a far more important reform than others When, in 1835, Harriet Martineau was nearly mobbed in Boston, personal violence being threatened and no prominent citizen venturing to her side, Emerson and his brother Charles hastened to her defence. "At the time of the hubbub against me in Boston," she writes in her autobiography, "Charles Emerson stood alone in a large company in defence of the right of free thought and speech, and declared that he had rather see Boston in ashes than that I, or anybody else, should be debarred in any way from perfectly free speech. His brother Waldo invited me to be his guest in the midst of my unpopularity."

In 1844, when Massachusetts citizen negroes had been taken to prison from ships in southern ports, Emerson delivered an oration on the anniversary of West Indian emancipation, and spoke sternly on the matter. "If such a damnable outrage can be committed on the person of a citizen with impunity, let the Governor break the broad seal of the State; he bears the sword in vain. The Governor of Massachusetts is a trifler, the State-House in Boston is a play-house; the General Court is a dishonored body, if they make laws which they cannot execute. The great-hearted Puritans have left no posterity." He demanded that the representatives of the State should demand of Congress the instant release, by force if necessary, of the imprisoned negro seamen, and their indemnification." As for dangers to the Union from such demands—"the Union is already at an end when the first citizen of Massachusetts is thus outraged." This address was a bugle, and it filled the anti-slavery ranks with fresh courage. The *Herald of Freedom*, reporting it at the time, says their eyes were filled with tears as this leader of New England literature came from his poetic solitude to join hands with them.

The service which students and literary men could render in those days was often the subject of anxious consultation, and Emerson never failed to counsel sacrifices for the public duty.

" When the ship is in a storm," he used to say, "the passengers must lend a hand, and even women tug at the ropes." When the Southern States began to secede, some frightened compromisers in the North hoped to soothe them by silencing the abolitionists ; roughs were employed to fill the anti-slavery halls and drown every voice. Sometimes there was personal violence. During the war, in which many of his friends were slain, and his only son wounded, no man did better service than Emerson, with voice, pen, and means; and when it ended his counsels were of the utmost importance.

Emerson had a happy old age, and lived to see his golden sheaves around him. In the " Address " (1837), now historical, which brought the fulminations of the Unitarian pulpit and university upon him, in his thirty-fourth year, he admonished the American scholar that, " if the single man plant himself indomitably on his instincts, and there abide, the huge world will come round to him." And now America has, in his own history, the impressive confirmation of his faith. In just twenty-nine years from the time that sentence was uttered, the university which repudiated him made him an overseer and a doctor of laws, and a lecturer to the students, and he was the most universally beloved and honored man in America. Where he singly opened his church to abolitionists, he lived to see all churches anti-slavery and the slave set free. The white-robed sage lay in the church founded by his Puritan ancestors, enlarged by his own thought, above whose pulpit was a harp made of golden flowers, and on it an open book made of pinks, pansies, roses, with the word " Finis." Flowers were never more truly symbolical. His effective weapons against error and wrong were like those roses with which the angels, in Goethe's " Faust," drove away the demons, and his sceptre was made known by blossoming in his hand.

The following extract from a letter written by Emerson to one of his children, is reprinted from Cabot's " A Memoir of R. W. Emerson," by permission of the publisher, G. W. Dillingham.

" You are bound to be healthy and happy. I expect so much of you, of course, and neither allow for nor believe any rumors to the contrary. Please not to give the least countenance to any hobgoblin of the sick sort, but live out-of-doors, and in the sea-bath and the sail-boat, and the saddle, and the wagon, and, best of all, in your shoes, so soon as they will obey you for a mile. For the great mother Nature will not quite tell her secret to the coach or the steamboat, but says, 'One to one, my dear, is my rule also, and I keep my enchantments and oracles for the religious soul coming alone, or as good as alone, in true love.' "

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW*

By Hezekiah Butterworth

(1807–1882)

That was a memorable scene in the Poet's Corner of Westminster Abbey, when the veil was lifted from the bust of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, the first American upon whom England had conferred such distinguished honor. James Russell Lowell was there, and made the eulogy, and left in all minds the impression of these simple words: "The most beautiful character that I have ever known." Mr. Lowell knew men, and among the great spirits of the age with whom he had been associated, he perhaps had known no literary man more intimately than Longfellow. The original families of Lowell and Longfellow in America had grown side by side on the banks of the Merrimac. The younger poet had succeeded the elder in the professorship of literature at Harvard College; the two had lived side by side in historic houses in the old Cambridge neighborhood on the Charles, and there had shared the amenities of suburban life and had studied the world together. It was said that Longfellow came to live in a house "on the way to Mt. Auburn;" Lowell lived in a house on the same road, and the two poets sleep together there now in the loving shadows of Boston's "Field of God."

Since the days of Horace, friendship has found no more sympathetic and beautiful expression in verse than in the lines inscribed by Lowell to Longfellow and in the poems written by Longfellow in reference to Lowell.

Says Lowell in his lines to H. W. L——:

"Long days be his, and each as lusty-sweet
As gracious natures find his song to be;
May age steal on with softly-cadenced feet
Falling in music, as for him were meet
Whose choicest verse is harsher-toned than he!"

Says Longfellow of Lowell in the "Herons of Elmwood:"

"Sing to him, say to him, here at his gate,
Where the boughs of the stately elms are meeting,
Some one hath lingered to meditate,
And send him unseen this friendly greeting;

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"That many another hath done the same,
  Though not by a sound was the silence broken;
The surest pledge of a deathless name
  Is the silent homage of thoughts unspoken."

The matchless lines in "The Two Angels," a poem that commemorates the events of the birth of a child to Longfellow and the death of the beautiful wife of Lowell on the same night, in which the poet sees an angel with amaranths go to the door of his neighbor, while an angel with asphodels comes to his own door, strikes the tenderest chords of life.

Longfellow was the poet of friendship, and he carried his heart friends wherever he went. The river Charles in his fancy made the letter *C* in its windings in the Brighton meadows before his door, and ever recalled three friends who had borne that name. One of the masterpieces of the work of his fading years is "Three Friends of Mine," in which he pictures Felton and Agassiz and the midnight parting with Charles Sumner at his door, and represents himself as one left to cover up the embers.

Henry W. Longfellow, the poet of "Hope, Home, and History," was a descendant of the family of William Longfellow, who came from England to Newbury, Mass., in 1675, and a son of Stephen Longfellow, an eminent lawyer and public man. He was born in Portland, Me., February 27, 1807. The family consisted of eight children, of which he was the second, and of which two were poets, the other being the Unitarian hymn writer, Rev. Samuel Longfellow.

He grew up a pure, loving boy in the schools of Portland, Me., fond of the woods, the hills, and the sea. "My Lost Youth" furnishes a delightful picture of this period of his life. It is said that his childhood fancy first found expression in the following rhymes:

"Mr. Finney had a turnip
That grew behind the barn,
And it grew and it grew,
But never did any *harm*."

A member of the Longfellow family has denied that these luminous but not very promising lines were the first offering of his muse. If the anecdote be apocryphal, the *boy* Longfellow yet began to love poetry and to write it, and he became a newspaper poet, one of those common soldiers of literature, while a student. He read Irving at twelve, and was charmed with the matter and style of "Rip Van Winkle." He felt the charm of Horace a little later, and probably learned his first lesson in eloquent literature from the "Poetic Art" of the Augustine age of Rome in her glory. Says Horace: "He who writes what is useful with what is agreeable wins every vote: his book crosses the sea; it will enrich the booksellers, and win for him imperishable fame."

Longfellow learned to make what is *useful, agreeable*, and this principle was one of the great secrets of his success in literary life. His early poems that did useful and agreeable service in the poet's corner of the newspapers of the time were, so far as we know, never collected. A few of them, however, survive, among them "The Spirit of Poetry." "Sunrise on the Hills," and "The Hymn of the Moravian Nuns."

At the age of fourteen he was prepared for Bowdoin College, which he entered a year later as a sophomore, and became a member of one of the most distinguished classes in American history. Among his fellow-students were Nathaniel Hawthorne, his personal friend, John S. C. Abbott, George B. Cheever, William Pitt Fessenden, John P. Hale, Calvin E. Stone, and Franklin Pierce, afterward President of the United States. He was graduated the fourth in his class.

The ambition for authorship came to him among the shades of Bowdoin. He said while there, thus anticipating in prose the "Psalm of Life:" "Whatever I study I ought to engage in with all my soul, for I *will* be eminent in something."

His poems published in the newspapers, principally in the *Boston Literary Gazette*, during his college life made for him a name, and he was offered the professorship of modern languages in Bowdoin College, soon after his graduation. To better prepare himself for the chair he went abroad, in 1826, in his twentieth year. He studied in France, Spain, Italy, and Germany. He made himself master of the French, Spanish, German, and Italian languages and literature, and returned to America in the late summer of 1829, and entered upon the duties of his professorship at Bowdoin in the autumn. He married Miss Mary Potter, of Portland, Me., and went to live in an old house, which was shaded by a single great elm, the site of which is still shown, on a salary of $1,000 per year. He published "Outre Mer," and taught and wrote with such distinguished success that, on the resignation of George Ticknor, he was offered the chair of modern languages at Harvard. For the larger preparation which he found necessary for his work, he went to Europe again in 1835. In his first visit to Europe he had met Washington Irving in Spain; he now made the acquaintance of Carlyle and Browning. His wife died in Germany.

He became a professor in Harvard in the fall of 1836, making his residence at the Cragie House, an old colonial mansion, shaded by trees, which Washington had used for his headquarters in 1775–1776. He married a most beautiful and accomplished lady, a daughter of Hon. Nathan Appleton, of Boston, whom he had met abroad, and who is supposed to be described in his romance "Hyperion." Here, happy in his domestic life, surrounded by the most scholarly men of America, his literary life ripened, his fame as a poet grew, and his sympathy with life as expressed in his works won all hearts. His "Voices of the Night" made him the poet of the home; "Evangeline," which is the American book of Ruth, made him the singer of the fidelity of holy affections, and "Hiawatha," the voice of the dying traditions of the Indian race.

He was a lover of his family, and a great affliction came to him in the summer of 1861. One July day his wife was playing with some sealing-wax with her children, when her dress caught fire, and she was enveloped in the flames, and burned to death. The poet is said to have suddenly changed from a young man to an old man under his weight of grief; he appeared in the streets of Cambridge again, in a few weeks, but unlike his former self. His affection for his dead wife in his widowerhood is expressed in the "Cross of Snow," written many years after her death :

"In the long, sleepless watches of the night,
A gentle face—the face of one long dead—
Looks at me from the wall, where round its head
The night lamp casts a halo of pale light.
Here in this room she died ; and soul more white
Never through martyrdom of fire was led
To its repose ; nor can in books be read
The legend of a life more benedight.
There is a mountain in the distant West
That, sun-defying, in its deep ravines
Displays a cross of snow upon its side.
Such is the cross I wear upon my breast
These eighteen years, through all the changing scenes
And seasons, changeless since the day she died."

He would take a dear friend into the room where her portrait hung, point to it, and say "my dear wife," and turn away to weep. His loving dream of his first wife is pictured in "The Footsteps of Angels :"

"And with them the Being Beauteous,
Who unto my youth was given,
More than all things else to love me,
And is now a saint in heaven.

"With a slow and noiseless footstep
Comes that messenger divine,
Takes the vacant chair beside me,
Lays her gentle hand in mine.

"And she sits and gazes at me
With those deep and tender eyes,
Like the stars, so still and saint-like,
Looking downward from the skies

"Uttered not, yet comprehended,
Is the spirit's voiceless prayer,
Soft rebukes, in blessings ended,
Breathing from her lips of air.

"Oh, though oft depressed and lonely,
All my fears are laid aside,
If I but remember only
Such as these have lived and died !"

In 1868 he went to England with his family. His fame in England was as great now as that of any English poet. He was received in London with the greatest love and hospitality ; he met the queen, and received a doctor's degree from the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge. His reception by the literary classes was not more warm than the appreciative interest which was shown by the people. He had become the poet of the English homes, and was as greatly read as the Laureate.

I met the poet under most pleasant circumstances, in the beginning of his beautiful old age. I was a young editor; I was called to make an address before a church literary society on the historic places of Boston, and I wrote to Professor Longfellow in regard to the history of the poem "I Stood on the Bridge at Midnight." I received a note from him in his well-known hand, saying that if I would visit him some evening at his home, it would give him pleasure not only to give me the history of the writing of this poem, but of any of his poems in which I might take an interest. I accepted the invitation, and one misty February night found me at his door, feeling as poor Phillis Wheatly must have felt when she stood at the same door after the invitation from Washington.

I well recall the night. The slow opening of the door by the quiet servant, the dim hall that seemed haunted by the shadows of the past, the great reception-room walled with books and pictures!

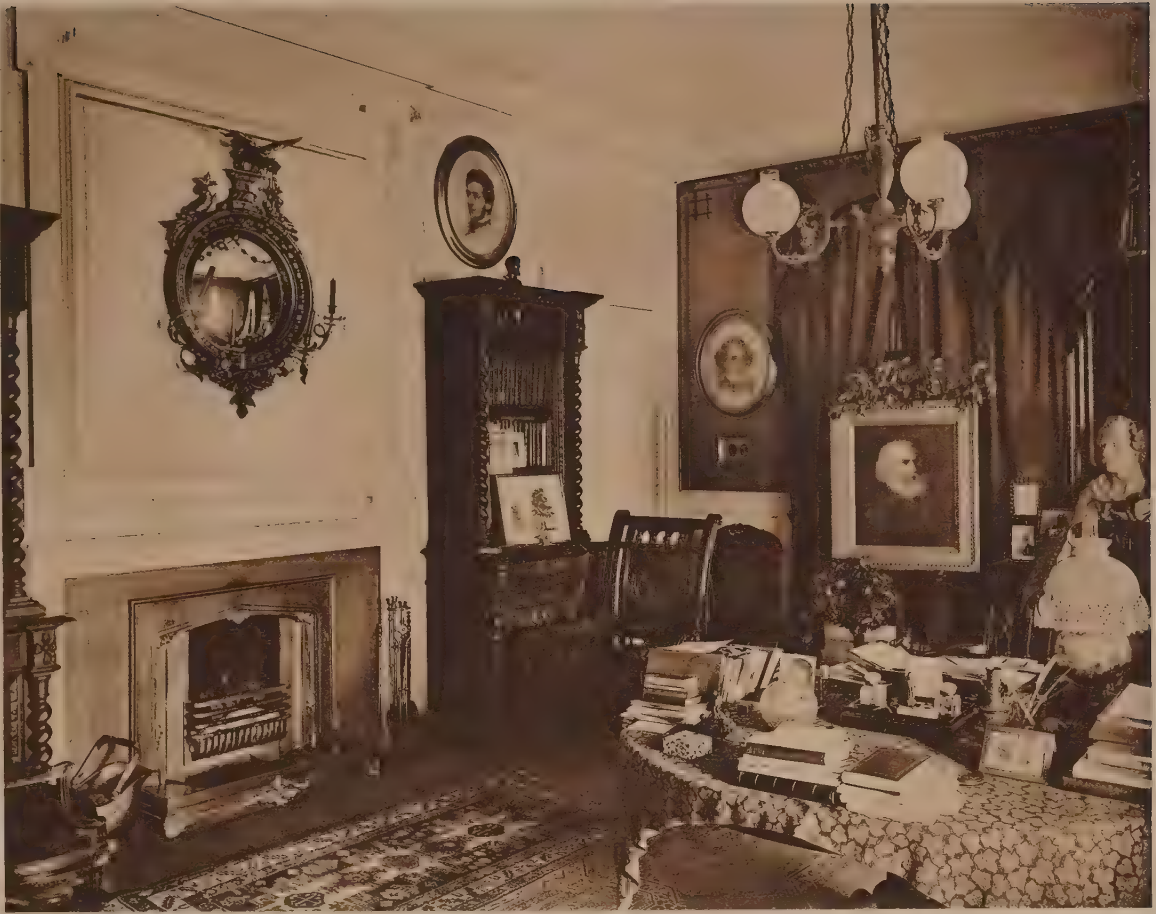
The poet was alone—he was a lonely man in his old age. He rose from his table, and came to meet me, a kindly light in his face, his flowing hair as white as snow. He saw that I was awed by his presence, and his gracious dignity changed at once into a friendly sympathy. "I have here some things that may interest you," he said; "here is Coleridge's inkstand; there is Tom Moore's waste-paper basket; and there," he added, in a reverent tone, "is a piece of Dante's coffin." The last relic was enclosed in a solid glass, and he proceeded to tell the story of how he had received it.

"You express a kindly interest in the origin of my poems," he added, in substance. "I will tell you something about the writing of some of them. You see the screen yonder; it is Japanese; there is written upon it the 'Psalm of Life.' The poem was written at Cambridge when the orchards were bright with buds and blossoms, and the days were in the full tide of the year. I did not write it for publication but for myself. I felt an inspiration to express in words my one purpose in life. I carried it about with me for a long time, when I was asked for a poem for the *Knickerbocker Magazine*, then a popular periodical, and I sent it to the editor without any expectation of its success with the people. It has been translated into nearly all languages that have a literature.

"In London I received an invitation to visit the queen. On returning from the palace, the coach was stopped by the crowd of vehicles in the street. There stepped before the door of the carriage an English workman. 'Are you Mr. Longfellow?' he asked. 'I am,' I answered. 'Did you write the "Psalm of Life"?' 'I wrote that poem, my friend.' 'Pardon me, but would you be willing to take the hand of a *workingman?*' 'Certainly, my friend; it would give me pleasure.' He put his hand through the carriage window, and I shook hands with him. That," said Mr. Longfellow, with emphasis and feeling, "was the best compliment that I ever received in my life."

The last declaration, in which we think that we have quoted the poet's exact words, shows the heart and character of the man. It is a photograph of his soul.

FROM PHOTOGRAPH



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He said that the poem "I Stood on the Bridge at Midnight" was written in the lonely hours of his widowerhood, when he used to visit Boston evenings and return over the bridge of the Charles. The bridge grew still as the night wore on, and the procession of the day became thin. There was a furnace at Brighton at that time, and the reflection of the red fire fell across the dark river. The bridge over the Charles is nearly the same now as then; it has been somewhat reconstructed, but the wooden piers are there; the drifting seaweed, the odor of the brine, and the processions of "care-encumbered men" vanishing into the night. An English nobleman who is a literary critic has pronounced this poem the most sympathetic in the language. Its popularity probably is due to the night scene and the spirit of self-renunciation. It is one of the most beautiful songs of the age as set to music by two English composers. We never tire of the message of sympathy.

"Excelsior," which has been greatly parodied, expresses in a simple way what Browning has more artistically illustrated in "Childe Roland to the Dark Tower Came." It was written one evening after the poet had received a letter from his beloved friend, Charles Sumner, full of lofty sentiments, expressed in the classic rhetoric of the time. As he dropped the letter the word "Excelsior" caught his eye, and the inspiration and the vision of the poem came. He wrote it on the back of the letter which contained the magic word.

It is said that the words "Cumnor Hall," in Meckle's ballad, so haunted the mind of Sir Walter Scott, as to compel him to write "Kenilworth." "I was led, I think," said Longfellow, "to write the 'Wreck of the Hesperus' by the words 'Norman's Woe.' I had been reading one dreary night of the disasters that had befallen the Gloucester fishing fleet, and my eye met the words 'Norman's Woe.' I went to bed, but the story haunted me. I arose and began to write, and the poem came to me in whole stanzas."

"The Old Clock on the Stairs" was suggested by an old farmhouse timepiece at the country house of Mr. Appleton, his father-in-law. While the house described was in the country, the description answers well to the poet's own residence, which also contained an eight-day clock which reached from floor to ceiling. Many people never so much as doubted that the Cragie House and its clock were meant in the poem. The clock in the Cambridge house was so old and antique that most visitors fancied that they saw in it the real "old clock on the stairs." The refrain was suggested by the French words "Toujours jamais, jamais toujours" in an elegant French quotation.

"Hiawatha" was pictured to the poet by the story which Abraham le Fort, an Onondaga chief, gave to Schoolcraft. The musical vocabulary in which the Indian words suggest their own meaning may be found in Schoolcraft. It is the one poem which commemorates the legends of the Indian races; it will doubtless outlive those races, and be their tradition in future ages. The Indian words, as in the instance of "Norman's Woe," must have suggested in many cases the scenes and incidents of the poet's creative fancy.

"The March of Miles Standish," which followed, repeats the old apocryphal

Puritan story, which no one but a critic would care to question. We think, however, that the ancient fable of Europa is likely to have suggested the ride to Duxbury on the back of the bull, for at that time there were few cattle in the colonies.

"'The Tales of a Wayside Inn,'" said Mr. Longfellow, "received that name merely to give them locality. I had never been in the Wayside Inn, but once." (We think that he stopped there on his first return from Europe when travelling from Albany to Boston, on which road there were the White Horse, Red Horse (Wayside), and Black Horse Inns.) "I had written the stories in verse, and I wished to connect them with a sympathetic place and a company of story-tellers. My friends were accustomed to dine occasionally at the Wayside Inn, and it seemed a pleasing fancy to place my story-tellers there." The Poet of the company was Mr. Parsons, the Dante scholar; the Theologian, Mr. Wales; the Sicilian, Luigi Monte, an exile from Sicily, whom President Lincoln sent back in an official capacity, under the influence of Charles Sumner, when Sicily became free during the Italian revolution; the Jew was Edrika, an accomplished Boston merchant.

"Paul Revere's Ride" is perhaps the most popular, and the "Vision Beautiful" the most philosophical, of these many tales. The story of "Lady Wentworth" is a most charming story of old New England folk-lore, and wears the quaint and sympathetic colorings of colonial times.

"I have given up the theory," said Mr. Longfellow, "that the old stone tower at Newport is to be connected with the Norsemen. I feel certain now that it is merely a windmill. I have a model of just such a mill, which was a common sight on the coasts of the North Sea." His residence in Scandinavia as a student gave him a love of the literature of the North, and hence his tales from the Sagas.

The melodious and sympathetic qualities of Longfellow's verse meet well the wants of the composer. The songs of the poet are more and more being wedded to music. "The Bridge," "The Rainy Day," "The Day is Done," "The Legend of the Crossbill," "The Silent Land," "Allah," "The Sea Hath its Pearls" (translation), and many other poems have found expression in musical art as inspired and beautiful as themselves, and thus winged will long go singing through the world. The English composers have thus far been the best interpreters of his songs.

His view of literature at that time, when he had made his fame and stood in the ripeness of the harvest, was expressed in the words of Fitz Greene Halleck, which he quoted: "A little well written is immortality." He had always acted on Horace's advice as given in the "Poetic Art," and had chosen subjects that waited a voice, and made what was useful, agreeable. Every poem, even though an inspiration, had been carefully revised, until the best and most sympathetic, picturesque, and worthy expression was found. His poems grew in art with years. One of his earliest volumes was "Outre Mer," which was followed by "Hyperion" after some years; both prose works were filled with the spirit of poetry. In 1839 he published his first popular volume of verse under the title of "Voices of the Night;" in 1841, "Ballads and other Poems;" in 1842, "Poems on Slavery;" in 1843, "The Spanish Student;" in 1846, "The Belfry of Bruges;" and in 1847, "Evangeline," which established his fame. His other works were published after intervals of two or three years, with a long silence after the death of his wife in 1861. The last of his great poems was "Morituri Salutamis," read by him at the fiftieth reunion of his class at Bowdoin College. One of his most perfect poems, and perhaps the most elegant of its kind in any language, was produced at this period of the beginning of life's winter, "Three Friends of Mine."

One March day in 1882, a lad from one of the Boston schools came to me, and said that some pupils from the school wished to call on the poet, and asked me if I supposed that he would receive them and give them his autograph. I recalled that Longfellow had said to me that he always answered applications for autographs, adding, "Would it not be discourteous in me to refuse my name to one who took such an interest in anything which I had written as to write me for such a favor?" I replied that I had no doubt but that the poet would receive them kindly; that he loved young people, and advised them to make the call.

He received the lads with his usual kindness, showed them the historic associations of the old house, and then in their company looked over on the Brighton meadows and the Charles River with its now icy *C*, for the last time. The day was declining, the last March day that he would ever see in health. Illness came soon after this visit from the school-boys, and soon he who had lived on the way to Mt. Auburn, was borne to the calm city of the dead. His grave is near Spurzheim's, not far from the gate, on a beautiful knoll, and is marked by a simple stone with a plain inscription.

Longfellow was the poet of humanity and eternal hope, and his poetic scriptures are always sought and always will be by spirits seeking sympathy. He doubtless will live as the poet of the heart long after greater rhetoricians and more philosophical poets have lost their influence. It is the poet that is most human that has the greatest influence and the most enduring fame.

As the poet of eternal hope, his horizons ever lift. He could not have written Browning's "Lost Leader." His characters are all happy in the end; his ships of song all come to blue harbors and happy ports. Poems like Lowell's "Rhœcus," where opportunity is lost forever, find no expression in his muse, but rather the rainbow always that shines in the "Legend Beautiful." His Sordellos do not fail; they attain; the people of his fancy overcome even their sins and mount on them like ladders to heaven. Even old age in his view is full of opportunity, and all experiences have their kindly helps and opportunities. Though a translator of Dante, his own muse had no "Inferno," but only a "Purgatorio."

He is the most loved poet of our own or of any age; the American Horace, whose pictures of all that is best in our early history will ever remain. To study him is to grow. He never gave to the world a soiled thought, or planted a seed in any mind whose flower and fruit were not good. "The most beautiful character I ever knew," said Lowell amid the shadows of the royal tombs of the Abbey, as his white bust was placed among the ghosts; and so felt those who laid him down to rest in the kindly earth of Mt. Auburn's fields and flowers, on the banks of the calm, rippling Charles; and so feel those who visit that simple spot, and rest in thought there amid the vines and roses under the trees.

He touched all life to make it better, and humanity will ever be grateful to the Heavens that he lived and sang.

Hezekiah Butterworth

ALFRED TENNYSON*

By Clarence Cook

(1809–1892)

Few of the world's great poets have woven into their verse so much autobiographical material as the late Lord Tennyson, Poet Laureate of England. All his early poetry is suffused with tints, sombre or bright, and breathes of sounds that recall the landscape of the Lincolnshire in whose sunniest spot he was born, but in near neighborhood to "the level waste, the rounding gray" of "the dark fen," and within sight and sound of the "sandy tracts" and "the ocean roaring into cataracts." Later, we find in some of the poems that have made for themselves a place in the heart of all English-speaking people, vivid pictures, in words or phrases, recalling his travels in Italy and Greece; and in the latter half of his life we follow him to the southern part of England, to Surrey and the Isle of Wight, where we find him in his "careless-ordered garden, close to the edge of a noble down," or "hear the magpie gossip garrulous under a roof of pine." But, to quote the lines that illustrate this autobiographic element in Tennyson's poetry, or that show his happy way of making use of his actual experiences, by which again we are able to get an impression of his way of life, and of the manner of man he was, would be to transfer a goodly portion of his verse to these pages.

Alfred Tennyson was born August 5, 1809, at Somersby, Lincolnshire, and

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was the third son in a family of five sons and seven daughters born to the Reverend George Clayton Tennyson, who was rector of Somersby, and held, besides, the livings of Beg-Enderby and Great Grimsby.

Tennyson's father was a man of various tastes and accomplishments, dabbling in poetry, painting, architecture, music, the study of language and mathematics, but doing nothing of note in any of these things. Even as a preacher he seems to have made but little impression, if we may judge by the answer made by one of his old parishioners to the question: "What sort of sermons did Mr. Tennyson preach?" "Eee read um from a paäper, an I didn't knaäw what um meant." But the father's versatility doubtless did his children good service; for in such a village as Somersby, the opportunities for general culture were few. Up to the age of seven, when he was sent to the grammar-school at Louth, Alfred was taught at home by his father. We are told that in the case of each of his boys, Mr. Tennyson was in the habit, before presenting them at the grammar-school, of making them commit to memory and recite every day one of the Odes of Horace, beginning with the Ode to Mæcenas and ending with the "In Praise of Augustus"—the last Ode of the four Books. Alfred went to Louth, entering the grammar-school the Christmas after the battle of Waterloo. His brother Charles was already there, and the whole family moved to Louth from Somersby in order to make a home for the boys. In 1820, at the age of eleven, Alfred left the school, and returned with his family to the parsonage at Somersby. In 1828 he went to Cambridge, and the years that elapsed between his leaving the grammar-school and his entering the university were among the most important in the youth of the poet. His further instruction in preparation for college was carried on at home; but on the whole the teaching was desultory; although, judging from the results, what was done in the way of direct instruction was done thoroughly. As Mr. Graham tells us, there was not a clever man in the county who was not asked to give his assistance in the task. One tutor drilled Alfred in mathematics; another in music; and a Roman Catholic priest taught him and his brother linguistics with a view to the university; and Alfred was allowed to spend much time in wandering about the moors, or in the woods that covered the hills on whose skirts the village of Somersby stood. Carlyle writes to Emerson: "You see in Tennyson's verse that he is a native of moated grange and green flat pastures, not of mountains and their torrents," and this is true in part; but Mr. Graham tells us that the country about Somersby is not flat, but broken and hilly, and that the place is named Somersby, *i.e.*, summer's town, because it abounds in birds and flowers; and, indeed, one may know by the frequent allusions to flowers and birds, and the nice observation shown in these allusions, that these things must have made a strong impression on the youthful mind of the poet. He learned nature at first hand, and had his lesson by heart, unconsciously imbibing it from his walks alone, or with his dearly loved elder brother, Charles—elder by five years—over all the countryside; and there is no doubt that the wild and dreary side of that region, the flat expanse of the fens slowly rescuing from the ever threatening and invading sea, the long line of the coast with its beaches and ridged mounds of sand built by the winds, and strengthened by the bird-sown seeds of grass to be barriers against the ocean—that all these scenes made an impression on his mind strong to balance the sweet woodland pastoral note of the Somersby brooks and flowery hollows, no one can doubt who knows Tennyson's poetry. He had little love for the hardier sports of boys, but was not a retiring child either, nor over-contemplative, although he was described by one of the old Northern Farmers he has immortalized, as a boy who would "sit for hours on a gate gawmin about him!" But this indolence was a trait that he had in common with many men destined to greatness, and it clung to him all his life. It was no sign of an indolent mind, but rather evidence of, perhaps, an over-active one. His earliest volume of poems—made up of his own with contributions from his brothers, Charles and Frederick, and published when he was eighteen—though written all along the track of the preceding years, bears evidence of much youthful wrestling with the problems of life, mingled with much that witnesses to the boy's pure joy in living. He began to write poetry at a very early age, and he found in his family an audience by no means at one in their appreciation of his talent. After hearing some of his verses, his grandfather gave him a half-guinea, and prophesied that it would prove the first and the last of his earnings by that trade. Whether or not the old gentleman lived to hear of his getting a whole guinea a line for some of his work, as we think we remember to have heard was the case with "Sea Dreams," we do not know; but, with his probable taste in poetry, supposing him to have cared for the poetry of his time, he would doubtless have looked upon Alfred's success as another sign of the degeneracy of the age. As has been hinted, Mr. Tennyson was very careful of his money, and his boys were not allowed much spending-money. Alfred and his brother Charles had the natural youthful desire to see their poetry in print, but they could not with all their savings raise the money to meet the expense of publication. An old nurse of the family, the wife of the coachman, is authority for the statement that it was her husband who first showed the boys a way out of the difficulty. "Why don't you make a book of some of these poems you are all the time writing, and sell it to a publisher?" Acting on this hint the boys offered their small collection to a publisher, who doubtless thinking that two families so well-placed in the county as the Tennysons and the Fytches would insure the success of their young offshoots' venture, assumed the expense of printing, and gave the budding poets ten pounds to boot. The "Poems by two Brothers" appeared in 1827. The news of its publication was greeted by one of the uncles with the remark: "I hear that my nephew has made a book. I wish it had been a wheelbarrow!" The thin volume has long ago passed into the domain of "books not to be had," and when by any chance a copy is brought to light the price it brings in the open market would have taken the uncle's breath away. The book has lately been reprinted, and in this form is now accessible.

At Cambridge, Tennyson entered Trinity College, and while there made the acquaintance of Arthur Henry Hallam, which soon ripened into the friendship

ROBERTS FECIT.

TENNYSON IN HIS LIBRARY.

that has been made immortal in the poem "In Memoriam." The only distinction Tennyson would seem to have gained at Cambridge was the Chancellor's gold medal awarded for the prize-poem "Timbuctoo," a curious production long consigned to oblivion but now included in the authorized edition of the poet's collected work.

In 1811 the Rev. Mr. Tennyson died, and on leaving Cambridge, Alfred returned to Somersby and lived with his mother and sisters. In 1830 he published "Poems chiefly Lyrical," in 1832 "Poems," and in 1842 "Poems," in two volumes, which first opened the eyes of the English public to the fact that a new planet had appeared in the heaven of poetry, and Tennyson's name soon became a household word. In 1845 he was awarded a pension of £200 per annum from the Civil List, and in 1850 he was made Poet Laureate, on the death of Wordsworth. In the same year he married Miss Emily Sellwood, whom he had long known at Somersby, the daughter of a lawyer, and niece of Sir John Franklin. In 1855 he received the honorary degree of Doctor of Civil Law from Oxford and in 1884, being then in his seventy-fifth year, he was raised to the peerage under the title of Baron Tennyson of Aldworth and Farringford.

Tennyson was an ardent lover of England, and seldom left his native country, and never for any long time. He had two residences, one at Freshwater, in the Isle of Wight, and the other at Aldworth on the top of Blackdown, in Surrey. He changed from one of these places to the other according to the seasons and led in both the same quiet family life, devoted to poetry, and enjoying to the full the delights of the country, caring little for other society than that of his intimate friends—a strong contrast in this respect to his great contemporary Browning, who delighted in the social life of London, as that life delighted in him. Mr. Edwin Arnold has given in a recent number of *The Forum* (1891) a very pleasant account of a day spent at Farringford in the company of the venerable poet and his only surviving son Hallam, named after the friend of his father's early years. Although Tennyson was averse to mingling in general society, and was difficult of access in his home, except to his intimate friends, yet those friends were among the elect spirits of England, and he has recorded his feeling for some of them—for Maurice, Fitzgerald, Spedding, Lear, among others—in poems that deserve a place among his best. His friendship for Carlyle grew out of his admiration for the genius of the man as well as his character, and Carlyle has left more than one sketch of his friend among his inimitable word-portraits of notable men.

The interest of Tennyson's life really centres in his early days spent in his father's parish of Somersby; his later life has flowed on in a stream rarely interrupted by any events with which the public was concerned, or that can be said to have greatly influenced his poetry. He was no doubt the product of his time, and took a deep interest in what was going on in the world, especially in so much of it as affected England. But his strong conservatism made him unsympathetic with much that is called progress, and which at any rate is change; and change of any sort was little welcome to Tennyson. He was not born to be a reformer, and was ill-fitted by his temper to lead public opinion. But his lofty moral character, the noble purity and elevation of his life, and his singleness of aim, joined with his extraordinary powers as a poet, as a wielder of the English language—and no poet since the great days has had such a varied power over all chords of the lyre—these elements combined to make the name of Tennyson without a doubt the greatest of his time among the poets of the English-speaking race. He died at Aldworth House, in Surrey, October 6, 1892.

Clarence Cook

CHARLES DICKENS

By Walter Besant

(1812–1870)

Charles Dickens was born at Landport, now a great town, but then a little suburb of Portsmouth, or Portsea, lying half a mile outside of the town walls. The date of his birth was Friday, February 7, 1812. His father was John Dickens, a clerk in the navy pay-office, and at that time attached to the Portsmouth dockyard. The familiarity which the novelist shows with sea-ports and sailors is not, however, due to his birthplace, because his father, in the year 1814, was recalled to London, and in 1816 went to Chatham. They still show the room in the dockyard where the elder Dickens worked, and where his son often came to visit him. The family lived in Ordnance Place, Chatham, and the boy was sent to a school kept in Gibraltar Place, New Road, by one William Giles. As a child he is said to have been a great reader, and very early began to attempt original writing. In 1821, Charles being then nine years of age, the family fell into trouble; reforms in the Admiralty deprived the father of his post, and the greater part of his income. They had to leave Chatham and removed to

London, where a mean house in a shabby street of Camden Town received them. But not for long. The unfortunate father was presently arrested for debt and consigned to the Marshalsea, and Charles, then only ten years of age, and small for his age, was placed in a blacking-factory at Hungerford Market, where all he could do was to put the labels on the blacking-bottles, with half a dozen rough and rude boys. The degradation and misery of this occupation sunk deep into the boy's soul. He could never dare to speak of this time; it was never mentioned in his presence. Not only were his days passed in this wretched work, but the child was left entirely to himself at night, when he made his way home from Hungerford Market to Camden Town, a distance of four miles, to his lonely bedroom. On Sundays he visited his father in the prison. Of course such a neglected way of living could not continue. They presently found a lodging for him in Lant Street, close to the Marshalsea, where at least he was near his parents, and his father shortly afterward recovering his liberty, they all went back to Camden Town, and the boy was sent to school again. It was to a private school in the Hampstead Road, where he remained for three or four years of quiet work. It must have been then, one suspects, rather than at Chatham, that he became so great a devourer of books. But he was never a scholar in any sense, and the books that he read were novels and plays. That the family fortunes were still low is proved by the fact that, when he was taken from school, no better place could be found for him than a stool at the desk of a solicitor. Meantime his father had obtained a post as reporter for the *Morning Herald*, and Charles, feeling small love for the hopeless drudgery of a lawyer's office, resolved also to attempt the profession of journalist. He taught himself shorthand with the resolution—even the rage—which he always threw into everything he undertook; and he frequented the British Museum daily in order to supplement some of the shortcomings of his reading. In his seventeenth year he became a reporter at Doctors' Commons. At this period all his ambitions were for the stage. He would be an actor. All his life, indeed, he loved acting and the theatre above all things. As an actor, one feels certain that he would have succeeded. He would have made an excellent comedian. Fortunately, he was saved for better work.

It was not until he was two-and-twenty that he succeeded in getting permanent employment on the staff of a London paper, as a reporter. In this capacity he was sent about the country to do work which is now mainly supplied by local reporters. It must be remembered that there were as yet no railways. He had to travel by stage-coach, by post, by any means that offered. "I have been upset," he said years afterward, speaking of this time, "in almost every description of vehicle used in this country."

About this time he began the real work of his life. In December, 1833, the *Monthly Magazine* published his first original paper, called "A Dinner at Poplar Walk." Other papers followed, but produced nothing for the contributor except the gratification of seeing them in print, because the magazine could not afford to pay for anything. However, they did the writer the best service possible, in enabling him to prove his power, and he presently made an arrangement with the editor of the *Evening Chronicle* to contribute papers and sketches regularly, continuing to act as reporter for the *Morning Chronicle*, and getting his salary increased from five guineas to seven guineas a week. To be making an income of nearly four hundred pounds a year at the age of two or three and twenty, would be considered fortunate in any line of life. Sixty years ago, such an income represented a much more solid success than would now be the case. The sketches were collected and published in the beginning of the year 1836, the author receiving a hundred and fifty pounds for the copyright. He afterward bought it back for eleven times that amount. In the last week of March in the same year appeared the first number of the "Pickwick Papers;" three days afterward Dickens married the daughter of his friend, George Hogarth, editor of the *Evening Chronicle*, and his early struggles were finished.

No article, however short, treating of Charles Dickens, can avoid entering into the details of his early history with a fulness which would be out of all proportion to what follows, but for the remarkable fact that the events of his childhood and his youth impressed his imagination and influenced the whole of his literary career so profoundly, that to the very end of his life there is not a single work in which some of the characters, some of the places, are not derived from his early recollections. Many other writers there are who have passed their childish days among the *petites gens*, but none who have so remembered their ways, their speech, and their mode of thought. The Marshalsea prison of Little Dorrit is the place where for two years he went in and out. The Queen's Bench and its Rules were close to the Marshalsea; Bob Sawyer's lodgings in Lant Street were his own; David Copperfield, the friendless lad in the dingy warehouse, was himself; the cathedral of Edwin Drood was that in whose shadow he had lived; Mrs. Pipchin is his old landlady of Camden Town; the most delightful features in Mr. Micawber are borrowed from his own father; the experiences of Doctors' Commons, the solicitor's clerks, the life in chambers, are all his own; while of individual characters, the list of those which are known to be portraits more or less true to nature might be indefinitely extended. And yet, while he was early drawing on these early recollections, while they constantly furnished him with scenes and characters, he could not bear to speak of them, and no one except his friend and biographer, Forster, ever knew that he was himself, with all the shabby, mean surroundings in early life, exactly such as David Copperfield.

The rest of Dickens's life has the interest which belongs to success after success. It was a long, triumphal march. He had no failures; he suffered no defeats. There were times when his hand was not at his best, but never a time when his hand lost its power. This indeed seems the crowning happiness of a successful and singularly happy life, that when he was cut off—he died June 6, 1870—after fifty-eight years of continuous work, his brain was still as vigorous, his eye as keen, his hand as sure as in the first fresh running of his youth. It was indeed more than literary success which he achieved; he conquered the whole English-speaking world. This world, which now numbers nigh upon a hundred millions, loves him; all who can read his books love him. This love cheered him in his life, and will keep his memory green. Of the solid wealth which he acquired, the honor he enjoyed, the friends who gathered round him, and the brave and resolute front which he always showed, there is no space here to speak.

The following is the list of Dickens' works, in their order of appearance, omitting certain farces and pamphlets which belong to a more extended notice:

"Sketches by Boz" (1836), "The Posthumous Papers of the Pickwick Club" (1837), "Oliver Twist" (1838), "Nicholas Nickleby" (1839), "The Old Curiosity Shop" (1840–41), "Barnaby Rudge" (1841), "American Notes" (1842), "Martin Chuzzlewit" (1843), "The Christmas Tales"—viz., "The Christmas Carol," "The Chimes," "The Cricket on the Hearth," "The Battle of Life," "The Haunted Man," and "The Ghost's Bargain"—(1843, 1846, 1848), "Pictures from Italy" (1845), "Dombey and Son" (1846–48), "David Copperfield" (1849–50), "Bleak House" (1852–53), "The Child's History of England" (1854), "Hard Times" (1854), "Little Dorrit" (1855–57), "A Tale of Two Cities" (1859), "The Uncommercial Traveller" (1861), the "Christmas Numbers" in *Household Words* and *All the Year Round*, "Great Expectations" (1860–61), "Our Mutual Friend" (1864–65), "The Mystery of Edwin Drood" (unfinished). This long roll by no means represents the whole work of this most active of mankind. Public readings both in this country and in America, private theatricals, speeches, letters innumerable, journeys many, pamphlets, plays, the conduct of a popular magazine—first called *Household Words*, and then *All the Year Round*—and an ever-present readiness to enjoy the society of his friends, fill up the space when he was not actually writing. That he could do so much was mainly due to his orderly and methodical habits, to his clearness of mind, and to a capacity for business as wonderful as his genius for fiction. He knew no rest from the day when he first attacked shorthand, to the day when he fell from his chair in the fit from which he never recovered. He was incomparably the most active man, the hardest-working man of his age. In the history of letters there are many who have produced more work in bulk; there is not one who led a life so varied, so full, so constantly busy, so active, and so rich.

It is as yet too early to speak with certainty as to the lasting popularity of his work as a whole. Very much of it owed its general success to the faithful delineation of manners already passed away. He was the prophet of the middle class, and the manners of that great section of the community have greatly changed since the days when Charles Dickens lived among them and observed them. With the decay of these manners some part of present popularity must certainly pass out of his work; already a generation has appeared to whom a great deal of Dickens' work proves of no interest, because it portrays manners with which they are not familiar. They do not laugh with those who laughed fifty, forty, twenty years ago, because the people depicted have vanished. But when the second quarter of this century shall belong so truly to the past, that not one survives who can remember it, then these books will become a precious storehouse for the study and the recovery of part, and that a large part, of its life and manners.

Again, it is the essential quality of genius to create the type. In this Dickens has been more successful than any other novelist, ancient or modern. With him every leading character stands for his class. Squeers is the representative of the school-master, then too common, ignorant, brutal, and grasping; Winkle is the Cockney sportsman; it is impossible to think of red tape without naming Mr. Tite Barnacle; and so on through all the books. If he sometimes too plainly labels his characters with their qualities and defects, it is a fault caused by his own clearness of conception and of execution. It is another note of genius to suffer every character to work out its own fate without weakness or pity, and though Dickens deals seldom with the greater tragedies of the world in his domestic dramas, necessity pursues his characters as grimly and certainly as in real life. The villain Quilp and his tool make us forget, in the amusement which they cause, their own baseness. But their creator is not deceived. He makes them bring their own ruin upon their heads. To be true, not only to the outward presentment and speech and thought of a character, but also to the laws which surround him, and to the consequences of his actions, is a rare thing indeed with those who practise the art of fiction. Further, in this art there are permissible certain exaggerations, as upon the stage. There is exaggeration of feature, exaggeration of talk, exaggeration in action. There are degrees of exaggeration, by which one passes through tragedy, comedy, farce, and burlesque; but in all there must be an exaggeration. Dickens was master of exaggeration—if he sometimes carried it too far, he produced farce, but never burlesque. As for selection, which is perhaps the most important point after exaggeration, it came to him by instinct; he knew from the very outset how to select. It is by selection that the novelist maintains the interest of his story and develops his characters. There are countless things that are said and done in the progress of the history which have little interest and small bearing on the things which have to be told; and it is the first mark of the bad novelist that he does not know how to suppress irrelevant scenes. In the constructive branch of his art Dickens continually advanced. His earlier stories seem, like the "Pickwick Papers," to be made up of scenes. "Nicholas Nickleby" is a long series of scenes brilliantly drawn, in which new characters are always appearing and playing their disconnected part and disappearing. But as he grew older his conceptions of the story itself grew clearer, and his arrangement more artistic. It is, however, in description that Dickens proved himself so great a master. He laid his hand by instinct upon the salient and characteristic features, and he never failed in finding the right—the only—words fit for their illustration. In description he is never conventional, always real, and yet he allows himself, here as in his scenes of character and dialogue, a certain exaggeration which produces the happiest effects. In the hands of his imitators it becomes grotesque and intolerable.

As to his great and splendid gallery of portraits, it is difficult to speak briefly.

The whole of London life—the life of the streets, of the city, of the middle class—seems at first sight depicted in this gallery. Here are merchant, shopkeeper and clerk, lawyer and client, money-lender and victim, dressmaker, actor—one knows not what. Yet there are great omissions. The scholar, the divine, the statesman, the country gentleman, are absent, partly because Dickens had no knowledge of them, and partly because he forbore to hold them up to the ridicule which he loved to pour over his characters. His methods imposed upon him certain limitations; he aimed at commanding his reader's attention by compelling laughter and tears, but especially laughter. He who can command neither the one nor the other is no true artist in fiction. But in his laughter and in his tears one feels always the kindly heart as well as the skilful hand. It is for the former—for the deeply human heart—even more than for the latter, that the world will continue to love the memory of Charles Dickens.

ROBERT BROWNING

(1812–1889)

ROBERT BROWNING was born in 1812, at Camberwell, England. His father was a clerk highly placed in the house of Rothschild, and there are still living those who remember the excitement of the elder man and of his friends in New Court, when the time came for the son's first play to be produced at Covent Garden. He was a Dissenter, and for this reason his son's education did not proceed on the ordinary English lines. The training which Robert Browning received was more individual, and his reading was wider and less accurate, than would have been the case had he gone to Eton or Winchester. Thus, though to the end he read Greek with the deepest interest, he never could be called a Greek scholar. His poetic turn declared itself rather early, and in 1835 he had a poem, "Pauline," ready for the press. But publication costs money, and his business-like father did not see any chance of returns from poetry. A kind aunt, however, came to the rescue, and presented the young poet with the cost of printing the little book, £30. It was published at the price of a few shillings, and of course did not sell; but the author had the curious satisfaction of seeing a copy of this original edition bring twenty-five guineas under the hammer a few years ago. "Pauline" was not reprinted till the issue of the six-volume edition of Mr. Browning's works, in 1869. It was followed by the more ambitious "Paracelsus," a striking attempt to fill a mediæval outline with a compact body of modern thought; but in spite of the lovely lyric, "Over the sea our galleys went," and in spite of other beauties, the public did not heed the book, and it had no success except with a very small circle. It must be remembered that those days were days of poetic exhaustion. Shelley, Byron, and Scott were dead; the year before, Coleridge had followed them to the grave; Wordsworth was old, and his muse no longer spoke with her accents of an earlier day. Amid a mass of "keepsake" literature, affectations, and mediocrity, the still, small voice of the "Poems by Two Brothers" was heard by few, and that of "Paracelsus" was heard by fewer still.

Two years later the young poet came forward with the historical play of "Strafford," which was produced at Covent Garden with Macready in the title-part. It was not exactly a failure, but though the play itself and Macready's acting attracted the admiration of the critics, it was at once seen that the drama contained too much psychology and too little movement for a popular success. Mr. Browning, however, did not, for a long time to come, cease to be a "writer of plays," though it was not till eleven years after that another drama of his, "A Blot on the Scutcheon," was performed on the stage. The interval, however, was full of poetic activity. The energetic search of the members of the Browning Society, and especially of its founder, Mr. Furnivall, has succeeded in putting on record the place of first publication of several scattered poems of about this date. Four of them, including "Porphyria," and "Johannes Agricola," appeared in the *Monthly Repository*, edited by W. J. Fox, the Unitarian minister who was afterward so well known for his eloquent speeches against the Corn Laws. In 1840 came a small volume, bound, after the fashion of the time, in gray paper boards, and called "Sordello," after the Provençal poet mentioned in the "Purgatory" of Dante. The book appeared without preface or dedication, but in the collected edition of 1863 it bears a note addressed by Mr. Browning to his friend Monsieur Milsand, of Dijon, which contains the characteristic expressions, "I wrote it twenty-five years ago for only a few. . . . My stress lay on the incidents in the development of a soul; little else is worth study. I, at least, always thought so." "Sordello" in its original form is very rare and valuable now, as all the early editions of Mr. Browning's poetry have become; but on its first appearance nobody cared for it—it was regarded as nothing but a hopeless puzzle by a bewildered and defeated public. Even now, when Mr. Browning has long since formed his own public, "Sordello" is probably less read than any other work of his; it is too obscure and confused both in plot and in thought. But all the same, there are many interesting things in "Sordello."

and among them, especially at this moment, are the references to the place which, for fifty years, has fascinated the poet. Only the other day he wrote "Asolando," and half a century ago we find him writing:

> "Lo, on a healthy, brown, and nameless hill
> By sparkling Asolo, in mist and chill,
> Morning just up, higher and higher runs
> A child, bare-foot and rosy."

Asolo appears again very soon afterward in the lovely opening of the play "Pippa Passes." This came first in the series which appeared in the years 1841–46, under the odd title of "Bells and Pomegranates." There were eight numbers of this publication—thin, yellow-covered pamphlets, printed in double columns of small type, by Mr. Moxon; surely as unattractive a way as a poet ever attempted of bringing his wares before the world. Doubtless it was done in order that the low price might appeal to a large audience, but we doubt whether the sale of "Bells and Pomegranates" was ever large. The series is exceedingly rare now, and the curious who prefer to read those noble poems in this unsightly form have to pay £10 or £12 for the privilege of possessing them. In this first series appeared all the author's plays except "Strafford," namely, "Pippa Passes," "King Victor and King Charles," "The Return of the Druses," "A Blot on the Scutcheon," "Colombe's Birthday," "Luria," and "A Soul's Tragedy." But, alternating with these, appeared many of the shorter poems which have long since passed into the common treasure-house of all who care for poetry throughout the English-speaking world. One of the numbers contains the set called "Dramatic Lyrics," including "In a Gondola," "Waring," and "The Pied Piper of Hamelin." Another number contained "Dramatic Romances and Lyrics," among which are to be found such favorite poems as "How they Brought the Good News from Ghent to Aix," and "Saul." In this group of poems were also to be found the celebrated lines called "The Lost Leader." People at the time supposed that these indignant verses were aimed at the Tory backsliding of Wordsworth; and, indeed, though Mr. Browning in after-years denied their special applicability to the old Laureate, there can be no doubt that when he wrote them he had Wordsworth more or less in his mind.

In 1846 there happened to Mr. Browning something much more important than the publication of this or that poem; for it was then, on September 12th, in Marylebone parish church, that he was married to the poetess, Elizabeth Barrett. Their union was the direct result, in the first instance, of poetic and intellectual sympathy, and it was to the admiration which Miss Barrett, then an invalid, felt for the author of "Bells and Pomegranates," that they owed their first introduction. For the greater part of their married life Mr. and Mrs. Browning lived almost entirely in Italy, and especially at that house in Florence, close by the Porta Romana, which now bears a tablet with her name, and which gave its title to one of her best-known volumes of poetry. They had one child, born in 1849, Robert Barrett Browning, favorably known as a painter and a sculptor

After just fifteen years' marriage, Mrs. Browning died, in 1861; the frail body almost literally burnt up by the fiery soul within. Of the closeness of their union Mr. Browning, of course, never spoke, except to his intimate friends; but that it was of a degree of happiness to which it is seldom given to poor humanity to attain was made evident to the world when he wrote the splendid invocation to his "Lyric Love" at the opening of "The Ring and the Book."

During the first years of married life, Mr. Browning wrote little, but he read widely and deeply, and in 1849 he republished, in two reasonable-sized volumes, "Paracelsus" and "Bells and Pomegranates," under the title of "Poems, by Robert Browning." Next year followed his most definitely Christian poem, "Christmas Eve and Easter Day"—a small volume in which the mysteries of the Christian religion were handled in their relations with the modern world. Then, in 1852, followed a prose publication, which was, unfortunately, founded upon a mistake, and which was at once suppressed and not brought to light until the Browning Society reprinted it years afterward. This was the celebrated introductory essay to a volume purporting to consist of letters from Shelley. The letters were soon discovered to be fabrications, but Mr. Browning's essay was quite independent of their genuineness, being really a very interesting discussion on subjective and objective poetry, and of Shelley's writings as a type of the former. In 1855 came the two volumes called "Men and Women," and in their pages were to be found many of the poems best worth reading of all Mr. Browning's productions, and many of those that are best remembered at the present day.

It is only somewhat exasperating to the student, to find that in subsequent collected editions of his works, Mr. Browning has allowed his fondness for renaming and rearrangement to break up these volumes, and to distribute the greater part of their contents under other titles. In "Men and Women" the intensely dramatic quality of his genius found its best scope, for here are to be found such masterpieces as "Karshish," "The Arab Physician," "Fra Lippo Lippi," "Bishop Blougram," and "Cleon." It is amusing to note, if the authority of the bibliographers is to be trusted, that these volumes were reviewed, in the Roman Catholic paper called *The Rambler*, by no less a person than Cardinal Wiseman, who was extremely complimentary to "Bishop Blougram," and did not by any means despair of the writer's conversion. After "Men and Women" the poet was silent for a long time. His wife's health was failing, though at the time of the war in Lombardy her burning energy burst out in the "Poems before Congress," and though she watched the course of the struggle with never-ceasing excitement.

In 1861 the great grief of his life fell upon Mr. Browning, and he published nothing new till 1864, when there appeared the volume called "Dramatis Personæ." It is pretty safe, however, to declare that in this volume, with "The Ring and the Book," which was published in 1868, he reached his greatest height of performance. It is enough to recall to the memory of readers that "Dramatis Personæ" contains "James Lea's Wife," "Rabbi Ben Ezra," and "Prospice."

Then, four years later, as we have said, appeared four volumes of that marvellous performance, "The Ring and the Book," a poetic and psychological grappling with the question suggested to the poet by the account of a Roman trial that took place a couple of centuries ago. Whether anyone else in any country has ever before ventured to publish a poem in four simultaneous volumes, we cannot say; but, in spite of its length and difficulty, "The Ring and the Book" was and is one of the most successful of the author's works. It has every right to be so, for nowhere does he exhibit in a manner so sustained, and yet so varied, his own extraordinary insight into characters and motives entirely dissimilar.

Since that remarkable work was given to the world, Mr. Browning has attempted nothing approaching it in magnitude, or in the demand it made upon the sustained exertion of high intellectual powers. But he left his admirers no room to complain of diminished fecundity or of decaying vigor. "Balaustion's Adventure," including a transcript from Euripides, appeared in 1871, to prove his undiminished insight and inexhaustible interest in spiritual analysis. It was followed by "Prince Hohenstiel-Schwangau, Saviour of Society," a book suggested by the collapse of the French Empire, and recalling the scathing satire with which he lashed the impostures of spiritualism in "Sludge the Medium." In 1872 he published "Fifine at the Fair," to the delight of those who loved him, and, as usual, to the irritation of those who did not. "Red Cotton Nightcap Country" appeared in the following year; and, after an interval of two years, was followed by "Aristophanes' Apology." Again, after a similar interval, he gave us "The Agamemnon of Æschylus Transcribed." In 1879 came "Dramatic Idylls," with the stirring ballad of "Hervé Riel," which, as some think, roused the Laureate to emulative effort. "Jocoseria," published in 1883, reclaimed many of his earlier admirers, who had been estranged by what they regarded as the extravagance and whimsicality, not to speak of the obscurity and ruggedness, of so many of his later works. "Jocoseria," in fact, recalls "Men and Women" rather than the "Fifines," the "Hohenstiel-Schwangaus," and the "Red Cotton Nightcap Countries" of a later and less happily-inspired period. "Ferishtah's Fancies and Parleyings with Certain People of Importance in their Day" was the rather cumbrous title of a still later volume; and last of all appeared "Asolando," a work which displays all the old qualities, the old fire, and the old audacity, apparently untouched by advancing years, or even by imminent death. He died the same month that it appeared, December, 1889.

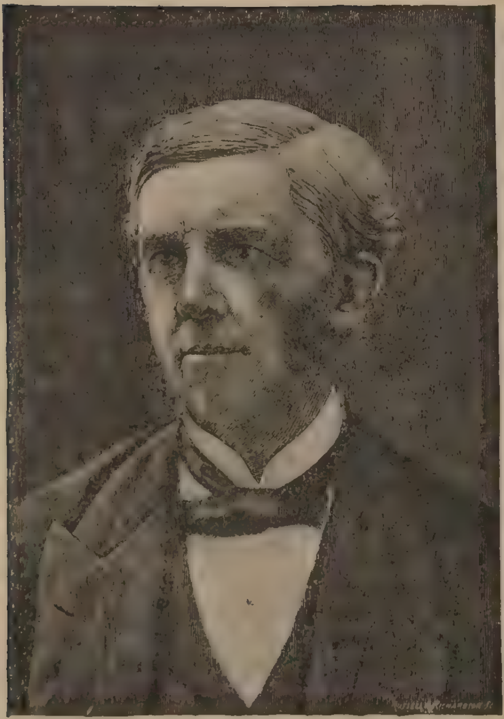
It has been Mr. Browning's fate to divide the reading world into two hostile camps. There are no lukewarm friends on his side; and from those who have never acquired a taste for the strong wine of his muse, it is sometimes difficult to extort recognition of the vigor, the insight, the tenderness, and the variety of intellectual sympathy which characterize the man, even, if we make abstraction of the poet. An industrious and enthusiastic society devoted itself during his lifetime to the promotion of a taste for his writings, but even that singular tribute to the strength of his personality does not shut the mouth of the sceptic. Those who love the poets of prettinesses, of artificial measures, and dainty trifles have at the present day an almost embarrassing wealth of choice. But Mr. Browning in his own sphere had no rival and no imitator. No other so boldly faces the problems of life and death, no other like him braces the reader as with the breath of a breeze from the hills, and no other gives like him the assurance that we have to do with a man. His last public words are the fit description of his strenuous attitude through all his literary work:

> "Strive and thrive!" cry "Speed—fight on, fare ever
> There as here!"

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES

By Francis H. Underwood

(1809–1894)



Abraham Lincoln, it is said, was one day talking with a friend about favorite poems, and repeated with deep feeling the well-known classic stanza:

> "The mossy marbles rest
> On the lips that he has prest
> In their bloom;
> And the names he loved to hear
> Have been carved for many a year
> On the tomb."

"That verse," he said, "was written by a man by the name of Holmes." If the manner of referring to the authorship was little flattering, the honest admiration of the great-hearted President might atone for it. An attorney in a country town in Illinois might well have been unacquainted with the reputation of a poet away in Massachusetts, whose lines, perhaps, he had seen only in the newspapers.

No reader of feeling ever passed that simple stanza unmoved. It is for all time not to be forgotten. Not a word could be changed any more than in "The Bugle Song." Its pathos is all the more surprising in connection with the quaint humor in the description of the old man who is the subject of the poem. There is a delicious Irish character in this, as in many other pieces of Holmes, reminding us of the familiar couplet of Moore—

> "Erin, the smile and the tear in thine eyes
> Blend like the rainbow that hangs in thy skies."

"The Last Leaf," from which the stanza is quoted, was written over fifty years ago, when the author was a little more than twenty-one. There are a few others of the same period which may have been considered trifles at first, but which seem to have slowly acquired consistence, so that while they are still marvels of airy grace, they are as firm as the carved foliage on a Gothic capital.

Not many writers live long enough to see themselves recognized as classics; the benign judgment is more frequently tardy; and then it happens, as De Musset says, that "Fame is a plant which grows upon a tomb." It takes years of repetition to impress new ideas in literature into the hearts and memories of men; and, as literary cycles move, the age of Holmes is still new. The noblest poetry in the language, from the unborrowed splendor of Shakespeare to the sparkling reflections of Gray, doubtless gave to contemporaries a sense of strangeness at first. Time was needed to harden the fresh lines, as well as to win for them a place among the elder and accepted models.

Holmes's father was minister to the Congregational church in Cambridge, a man of ability and author of some historical works. He lived in a venerable house of the ante-Revolutionary period which stood near the college grounds, and was demolished a few years ago to make room for a new academic building. One of Holmes's most characteristic articles is his description of "The Old Gambrel-roofed House." In the time of his youth there were people in Cambridge who remembered the march of the British troops on their way to Lexington and Concord in 1775. The speech and the manners of the colonists long retained the old English stamp, and the earliest of them had been contemporaries of Bunyan and almost of Shakespeare; and so Holmes must have heard, as I when a boy heard in another county, phrases and tones which could not have differed much from those of Shakespeare's common people. The influence of this is seen in his mastery of what is called the Yankee dialect, development of old chimney-corner English. For the same reason there is visible in his writings also some of that homely astuteness which seems to have died out with the polish of modern manners.

After completing his classical and medical studies, Dr. Holmes spent two years in Europe, principally in Paris, and then settled in Boston as a practising physician. Later he became a professor of anatomy, and remained in service until within a few years. Thus his duties took him away from his native Cambridge—although his heart never migrated—and turned him from the pursuit of poetry, except as a recreation. His recreation, however, must have been quite steadily indulged in, since his occasional poems had grown to a goodly volume before he was forty years of age. The great popularity of his later works has somewhat overshadowed the early poems, but there is ample evidence of genius in these first-fruits. None of them are meant to be thrilling or profound, but they all have some characteristic grace, some unexpected stroke of wit, some fascinating melody. I do not know any poems of a similar class which afford such unfailing delight. It is true they are mundane and their wit has often a satiric, "knowing" air; but the pleasantry is never mocking or malevolent; and the exuberance of spirit is contagious. Such a poem as "Terpsichore" (1843) is inimitable in its suggestions. The lines have a springing movement, an elastic pose. To appreciate it the reader must "wait till he comes to forty year." "Urania" has also many fine passages, grave as well as gay; many of its hints were developed later with brilliant effect in the "Autocrat." This "rhymed lesson" touches with felicity the prevailing vulgarities and solecisms in manners, dress, and pronunciation, and suggests, by anticipation, the jovial reign of a monarch who at his breakfast-table lays aside his robes of majesty and sometimes plays the rôle of his servitor, the merry philosopher in motley.

Naturally our author's reputation and his well-known brilliancy in conversation made him a great favorite in society. For many years he was virtually the laureate of Boston and Cambridge, and produced a great number of odes and hymns for public occasions. He of all men seemed to have the invention, the dash, and the native grace which give to occasional verse its natural and spontaneous air. This facility is surely not a cause for reproach. Such verse may seem easy, but it is easy only for a genius. In the lightest of his odes there is stuff and workmanship far removed from the negligent ease of *vers de société*.

A reputation for wit may be as injurious to a poet as to a would-be bishop. People could hardly be persuaded to take Sydney Smith seriously, and the world has been slow in recognizing the solid qualities, the keen insight, the imagination, and poetic feeling of Holmes. It is only one of the facets of his brilliant mind.

At the dinner where the twelve original contributors of the *Atlantic Monthly* met, the part which Holmes was to take was a matter of lively anticipation. The magazine had been projected for the purpose of uniting the literary forces of the North in favor of universal freedom; but Holmes had no part in its direction. Lowell prophesied at the time that the doctor would carry off the honors. In the first number there was an article by Motley, a fine poem by Longfellow, one by Whittier, a piece of charming classic comedy by Lowell, a group of four striking poems by Emerson, some short stories, articles on art and finance, and the "Autocrat of the Breakfast Table." What would not modern philosophers give for a similar combination to-day! Still, the enterprise might have failed but for the immediate interest awakened by the original thought and style of Holmes. The sensation was new, like that of a sixth sense. The newspapers quoted from the "Autocrat;" it was everywhere talked about, and in a short time its fame went through the nation.

The "Autocrat" was succeeded by the "Professor" and the "Poet." The talk of the "Professor" was somewhat more abstruse, though equally interesting to cultivated readers. The "Poet" attacked the dogma of the endless duration of future punishment. The "Autocrat" was easily superior in freshness as in popularity.

Two novels also appeared—"Elsie Venner" and "The Guardian Angel." They have undoubted merits, showing the keen thought, the descriptive power, and the play of fancy which are so characteristic of the author, and each has a subtle motive to which the characteristic incidents are made subservient. But Dr. Holmes is not great as a novelist as he is great in other things. The stories in one aspect are ambulatory psychological problems, rather than fresh studies of characters conceived without favoritism, with blended good and evil, wisdom and weakness—as God creates them. To produce new types, of universal interest, is given to few novelists. There have been scarcely more than a score of such creators since Cadmus.

It was with some surprise that I read lately a lament that Dr. Holmes had not written "a great novel"—a task which would have been as unsuitable to him as to Dr. Johnson or to Montaigne. It is not a question of a greater or less talent, but of a wholly different talent—as distinct as metaphysics and portrait-painting. The same critic complains because Holmes has not been "in earnest" like Carlyle. While the genius of that great writer is indisputable, I submit that one Carlyle in a generation is enough; another is impossible. That rugged Titan did his appointed work with fidelity. But is every author to lay about him with an iron flail? Is there no place for playful satirists of manners, for essayists who dissolve philosophy and science, who teach truth, manliness, and courtesy by epigram, and who make life beautiful with the glow of poetry? The magnolia cannot be the oak, although unhappy critics would have a writer be something which he is not. It is enough that Holmes has charmed myriads of readers who might never have felt his influence if he had been grimly in "earnest," and that he has inculcated high ideals of taste, character, and living.

By the time Holmes had reached his fiftieth year he was nearing the summit of fame. His readers were the cultivated classes of the whole English-speaking world, and he was not merely admired, his genial humor had won for him universal love; his unique personality was as dear as his writings. There is not room in the limits allowed me to dwell on the style of the "Autocrat;" fortunately neither analysis nor eulogy is necessary. The variety of topics, the sure, swift touches in treatment, the frequent gleam of imagery, and the lovely vignette of verse, altogether form an attraction for which there are few parallels in literature.

From the gay and jaunty verse of the poet's youth to his strong and passionate lyrics of the war there was a surpassing change, and it will be interesting to trace it in his life, and in the course of historic events.

In his early manhood he took the world as he found it, and did not trouble himself about reforms or isms. He had only good-humored banter for the Abolitionists, just as he had for non-resistants and spirit-rappers. When progressive people were in a ferment with the new transcendental philosophy (deduced from the preaching of Channing and the essays of Emerson), and were fascinated by the monologues of Alcott and the sibylline utterances of Margaret Fuller; when young enthusiasts, in their socialistic home at Brook Farm, dreamed of the near reign of human brotherhood; when Lowell was writing "The Present Crisis," a poem glowing with genius as with apostolic zeal; when feebler brethren, blown upon by new winds of doctrine, imagined themselves spiritual and profound, and felt deep thrills in pronouncing the words Soul and Infinite with nasal solemnity, Holmes, fully master of himself, and holding instinctively to his *nil admirari*, trained his light batteries on the new schools, and hit their eccentricities and foibles with a comic fusillade.

From this bellicose time it was nearly forty years to the appearance of Holmes' admiring and reverent life of Emerson, and in that long and stirring period there was much for him to learn, and something to unlearn. Who does not learn much in forty years? For one thing, the character and mind of the poet-philosopher were at length clearly revealed, and the uneasy swarm of imitators had shrunk out of sight. And as to slavery, the eyes of all men had been opened. Not only Holmes, but the majority of well-meaning men, hitherto standing aloof, were taught by great events. Many who admitted the wrong of slavery had believed themselves bound to inaction by the covenants inserted in the Federal Constitution. Some had felt the weight of party obligations. Some resented the fierce denunciation of the Church for its indifference to a vital question of morals. But I believe more were deterred from siding with the Abolitionists by reason of their intimate connection with other causes. They were nearly all believers in "woman's rights," and at that time those "rights" were chiefly to wear short hair and loose trousers, and talk indefinitely. Everything established was attacked, from churches and courts to compulsory schools and vaccination. The most vivid of my recollections of forty years ago are the scenes at the anti-slavery conventions. There were cadaverous men with long hair and full beards, very unusual ornaments then, with far-away looks in their eyes in repose, but with ferocity when excited, who thought and talked with vigor, but who never knew when to stop. There was one silent and patient brother, I remember, whose silvery hair and beard were never touched by shears, and who in all seasons wore a suit of loose flannel that had once been white. There was a woman with an appalling voice, and yet with a strange eloquence. And there was one who always insisted on speaking out of order, and who always had to be carried out of the hall, struggling and shouting as she was borne along by some suffering brother and a policeman. Not all the moral earnestness of Garrison, the matronly dignity of Lucretia Mott, the lovely voice and refined manners of Lucy Stone, nor the magnificent oratory of Wendell Phillips, could atone for these sights and sounds. Lowell had written:

> "Then to side with Truth is noble, when we share her wretched crust,
> Ere her cause bring fame and profit, and 'tis prosperous to be just."

But to men of delicate nerves it was not sharing Truth's crust that made the difficulty so much as the other uncongenial company at her august table. The po-

BRUNE PAGES PINXIT.

RAPHAEL INTRODUCED TO DA VINCI.

litical anti-slavery men, who came later, and who won the triumph, had none of these uncomely surroundings, although at the beginning they encountered as much odium.

When the first gun was fired on Fort Sumter, the cause of the slave and of the despised Abolitionists became the cause of all. Then could be felt the force of the sentiment which long before had won the pitying muse of Longfellow, which had inspired the strains of Lowell, and which had led the Quaker Whittier—minstrel and prophet at once—into the thick of the strife. Then it could be seen that the cause of eternal justice was not to be confounded with the vagaries of half-crazed agitators who were bent on curing all human ills by moral suasion and bran bread. The thunder of cannon cleared the atmosphere. The querulous voices of sectaries were hushed. The hearts of the loyal North throbbed as one heart. There was but one cry, and it was "Union and Liberty."

In a high sense this was a decisive period in the life of Holmes. From the outbreak of the war he took an enthusiastic part as a patriot for the preservation of the Union. His eldest son, now a Justice of the Supreme Court of Massachusetts, went out with the volunteers as a captain, and the father's "Hunt" for him after a battle is well remembered by readers of the *Atlantic*. At the time when the bravest of all classes were going forward to form new regiments and to fill up the shattered lines of the older ones, his lyrics came to the souls of loyal men with thrills of exultation. No man in those gloomy days could read them without tears. I have seen suppressed sobs and eyes glistening in tear-mist when they were sung in public assemblies. The people of this land have had no such time of heartache, of alternate dread and solemn joy, since the Revolution. When the fate of a nation was in suspense, when death had claimed a member from almost every family, and when the bitter struggle was to be fought out man to man, the phrases we might idly read in time of peace had a new and startling meaning. The words flashed in all eyes and set all hearts on fire. These songs of the war by Holmes will take their place with the grand and touching ode of Lowell, and with the stately and triumphal "Laus Deo!" of Whittier.

The most perfect of Holmes's smaller poems are probably those that appeared in the "Autocrat." "The Chambered Nautilus" is a fortunate conception, wrought with exquisite art. Equally striking is "Sun and Shadow," a poem which brings me delightful associations, as I saw it while the ink was still wet upon the page where it was written.

There is no need of dwelling upon his comic poems, such as the logical catastrophe of the "One-Horse Shay," as they are fully appreciated, so much so that they have doubtless led to the undervaluing of his more serious efforts.

He who saw Dr. Holmes twenty years ago at leisure in his library will not soon forget his impressions. In his mature manhood he was short and slender without being meagre, erect and firm in his shoes. His hair was abundant, if somewhat frosty, his forehead fair but not full; his eyes bluish gray; and his mouth as changeable as Scotch weather. If in front his head seemed small, in profile its capacity was evident, for the horizontal measure from the eyes backward was long. If the base of the brain is the seat of its motive power, his should not be wanting in force. An axe that is to fell an oak must have weight back of the socket.

In repose his clear-cut and shaven lips indicated firmness and prompt decision, a self-contained nature, well-reasoned and settled opinions ; but when he spoke, or was deeply interested, or when his eyes began to kindle, his mouth became wonderfully expressive. There was a swift play upon his features, a mobility which told of a sensitive and delicate nature. And those features were so sharply designed, free from the adipose layers and cushions that round so many faces into harmonious vacuity. His smile was fascinating and communicative ; you were forced to share his feelings. His welcome was hearty, and sometimes breezy ; you felt it in his sympathetic hand-grasp as well as in his frank speech. When conversation was launched he was more than fluent ; there was a fulness of apt words in new and predestined combinations ; they flowed like a hill-side brook, now bubbling with merriment, now deep and reflective, like the same current led into a quiet pool. Poetic similes were the spontaneous flowering of his thought ; his wit detonated in epigrams, and his fancy revelled in the play of words. His courtesy, meanwhile, was unfailing ; a retort never became a club in his hands to brain an opponent, nor did he let fly the arrows which sting and rankle. His enunciation was clear, but rapid and resistless. Whoever heard him at his best came to wonder if there had ever been another man so thoroughly alive, in whom every fibre was so fine and tense.

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